

112 E. C.

THE
Necessity of Revelation:
OR AN
ENQUIRY
INTO THE
Extent of HUMAN POWERS
With Respect to
MATTERS of RELIGION;

Especially those two fundamental ARTICLES,
The Being of God, and The Immortality of the Soul.

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THE
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CHARACTER



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J. G. RACE
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and most Obedient,
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SO late in the world for a man to go about to shew the Necessity of Revelation; some people, perhaps, may count an idle undertaking. And indeed all mankind in all ages seem to have been under a strong natural impression of their standing in great need of their having supernatural informations from heaven, that should direct them, especially, in matters of religion. But how much soever in other instances, our modern Deists seem to regard the original impressions or sentiments of human nature; yet in this article, they are so far from being inclined to do justice to our constitution, that they are pleased to express an absolute contempt of that prepossession that universally prevails in human nature, and has always disposed mankind to depend on the instructions of
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superior beings. So that the author would fain hope, that this attempt to prove the Necessity of Revelation, and that at this day there is such a thing among mankind, is not altogether needless. He apprehends, that if he makes good his argument, he thereby clears the way for the evidences of Christianity to triumph in all their strength and beauty. And he judges, that people's publishing catechisms for the instruction of youth in the principles of Deism, or to train them up in a contempt of Revelation and all traditional religion, is an instance of zeal on the other side, that renders an undertaking of this nature, so much the more necessary.

ST. ANDREWS,

1738.

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mental articles of natural religion, this is an undeniable proof, from the effect to the cause, that God has actually favoured mankind with the blessing of revelation: nor can that revelation any where be found but in the Christian institution.

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Cum enim sit nobis divinis literis traditum, cogitationes philosophorum stultas esse; id ipsum re & argumentis docendum est: ne quis honesto sapientiae nomine inductus, aut inanis eloquentiae splendore deceptus, humanis malit quam divinis credere. Lact. Inst. Lib. III. cap. i.

Quid ingrati sumus? quid nobis invidemus, si veritas divinitatis nostri temporis aetate maturuit? Fruamur bono nostro, & recti sententiam temperemus: cobibeatur superstitio, impietas expietur, vera religio reservetur. Min. Fel. Octav. cap. xxxviii.

THE
NECESSITY
OF
REVELATION;
OR, AN
ENQUIRY
INTO THE
Extent of *Human Powers*, &c.

Prefatory INTRODUCTION.

The importance of the argument, and the particular points debated, are taken notice of. A free and impartial enquiry is propos'd and recommended; wherein speculation must not be regarded, but common fact; or universal experience.

AT what rate people ought to value the entertainments of this world, one may learn from experience. And, perhaps, a wise man would but reckon all his present enjoyments but a very indifferent possession, did he not consider this life, as a state of discipline, wherein one is to be train'd up to far better and more lasting felicities. Nor is there any good

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reason to suspect, that death is the utter extinction of the whole man. The evidences are strong, that all the individuals of human kind shall exist beyond the grave. And doubtless among those who believe another life, nothing can be counted of greater importance, than one's clearly discerning the way wherein one shall assuredly attain to future happiness. To be set right therefore in this article, and to understand, whether we ought to take the assistance of revelation, or can only depend on our own discoveries, seems to be of the last moment to mankind, and to call aloud for the most serious attention of every man, whose prospects are not bounded to those few moments of duration, wherein the beasts live and perish.

THOSE *deists* who confess a futurity are of opinion, that to discern the way that leads to an after-state of happiness, mankind, *in no respect*, stand in need of revelation; but every man, in the exercise of his rational powers, is of himself sufficient to discover it. So, that according to those gentlemen, one can never reasonably apprehend, that God, after any supernatural manner, hath made known to mankind the way of future happiness; for that such a revelation could only tend to indulge the world in a slothful inactivity, as it would prevent their using their natural powers in a rational enquiry; wherein, with the greatest ease, they are of themselves able to discern every thing needful to happiness. And thus all supernatural revelation is quite

quite set aside, as altogether unworthy of God, and to no purpose.

ON the other hand, such as stand up for revelation do profess, that the knowledge of the way of happiness is from thence derived to mankind; and that the world stood in great need of such an extraordinary means of instruction. Among the several institutions, which are pretended to have come from heaven for this purpose, every man, who with any judgment has compar'd them together, will easily confess, as I must needs presume, that the *gospel* of *Jesus Christ* has a just claim to the preference, while the force of the *Jewish* institution is long since expired, and all other religious institutions are mere imposture. Nor can any impartial man who looks into such matters be ignorant, that the late controversies, that have happened about the truth of the *Christian* institution, have made it extremely manifest, that no revelation can be supported by better arguments, or more convincingly make out its title to divinity.

THE design of the following treatise is not to manage any argument for the truth of the *Christian* revelation in particular; it is to shew the necessity of revelation in general. And as this is a point, which, so far as I know, has not yet been fully debated, I hope, I have proposed some things that may have the good fortune to engage the world to turn their thoughts more close upon this argument. I cannot indeed say, that what I here offer to the publick, comes up to the rule *nonum prematur in annum*; but I can

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say, that half that time it has been in that condition; and that the oftener I review the argument, the more strongly I am convinced of the *necessity* of revelation. However, as many learned men are far more capable of setting this article in a stronger light, so I could wish to prevail with such persons to take the important argument into their consideration, and to supply what may be judged defective in the part I have acted. I was in good hopes that the publishing of my *oration* in the year MDCCXXXIII. wherein I give a general view of what is here more fully explained, would have tempted some better pen, to have oblig'd the world with a more masterly demonstration of the truth of this argument, than I am capable of affording. And since I am still well persuaded, that unanswerably to establish the *necessity* of revelation is effectually to overthrow the whole cause of *deism*; I shall be sorry if this second *venture* I now make does not produce some such worthy effect; which would greatly reward the labour I have employ'd, and prove no little comfort under a great deal of detraction, whereof this world is extremely liberal, and whereby they frequently mean to pave the way for other uneasy consequences.

IN the following attempt I have made towards explaining the *necessity* of revelation, I only consider two articles; namely, the *being and perfections of God*, and the *immortality of human souls*, in the knowledge and belief of which all religion is founded. And from an impartial enquiry

quiry into the *extent* of human powers, with respect to their capacity of acquiring the knowledge of these two articles, I am led to conclude, that mankind, without supernatural instruction, are not of themselves able to discover them. So that to introduce even natural religion among men, supernatural revelation seems extremely necessary: and the world's having been long since possess'd of the knowledge of these two articles, without which true religion can have no subsistence; this, in my apprehension, is a clear proof, *from the effect to the cause*, that mankind in former ages have had the benefit of supernatural revelation. And when so important an article is offer'd to be made out, let me hope, it will gain the attention of every considerate *deist*, who regards the approaching period of his existence, and would not like to mistake the way that leads to future happiness. With pleasure I go along with *Lactantius* in declaring: *non est desperandum, fortasse non canimus surdis. Nec enim tam in malo statu res est, ut desint sanæ mentes; quibus & veritas placeat, & monstratum sibi rectum iter & videant, & sequantur*^a.

As for the *necessity*, which I pretend there is for *supernatural* revelation, I sometimes, perhaps, call it *absolute*. But let it here be remarked, that the nature of my argument does not require, I should mean an absolute necessity *strictly* so called. This would imply an absolute im-

^a *Lact. Inst. lib. 5. cap. 1.*

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possibility on the part of man to discover those two articles just now mentioned, and thereby engage one in a very needless debate. Nor indeed can it properly be said, that man is under an absolute impossibility to make the discovery, For such an impossibility, as I take it, must arise from an inward contradiction in the nature of things; which, in the present case, can never be alledged; for to instance in the first article of all religion: as it is beyond all question, that in the frame of the universe there are numberless evidences that unanswerably demonstrate the being and perfections of God; so as little is it to be doubted, that the rational powers of human nature are capable of perceiving those evidences, wherein the mind cannot fail to be over-power'd with a commanding inward conviction. When one therefore *abstractedly* considers the natural proofs of this article, and the rational powers of human nature fitted to perceive them, one can never alledge, that mankind are under an absolute impossibility to discover the being and perfections of God; and consequently, that revelation is absolutely necessary. But this notwithstanding, it appears manifest to me, that revelation is so extremely necessary, that without it there is no reason to think, that ever *true religion* should have been known in the world. And I presume to flatter myself, that the impartial reader will come to find this opinion strongly supported, I had almost said, clearly demonstrated, in the following enquiry.

'TIS likely, I confess, that this opinion may appear not a little strange to those persons, who would conclude this argument from *speculation*; or from what they apprehend they meet with in *heathen* authors; and perhaps some people may hold me guilty of going about injuriously to lessen the reputation of ancient philosophers, who are greatly celebrated in the world for their penetration, and their extensive knowledge in natural religion. But I depend upon the justice of the candid reader, and rest myself satisfy'd, that before he comes to give judgment, he will impartially consider, whether this question ought *only* to be determined as I alledge, from *matter of fact*, or *experience*, without regarding the verdict of *speculation*, or abstracted reasoning? And whether the many unquestionable *facts* I have produced, are able to justify the conclusion I have made? Nor can it be thought I am wanting in my respect to ancient philosophers; the regard I have elsewhere openly shewn them, may well free me from every such imputation; and the care I have here all along taken, distinctly to point out the particular places of their writings where their opinions are to be found, may serve to assure the reader, I have been cautious to report nothing, which themselves have not asserted; so that what I have here explain'd, and in my *enquiry into the original of moral virtue*, concerning the sentiments of *heathen* philosophers, affords us a pretty full view of the whole of their character, so far as it concerns their knowledge in matters of religion; from whence

we may learn, *how far* they ought to be regarded, and what one is to expect from them; which will keep our judgment in a *mean* porportion suited to their real merit, and on either side prevent all excess. And if every little philosopher among us, is now far more knowing than all the great characters of antiquity; the following enquiry will hinder our vanity, and let us see to what source we ought thankfully to ascribe our superiour improvements, and to what kind being we are infinitely beholden for the glorious light that now shines in our minds, while they were involved in thick darkness. And when the reader comes to make such reflections, he is so far advanced in the ways of truth, or in making a just discernment of things; and a great part of my design is gained.

BUT as these pages may come to be read by persons of different characters, and I would gladly prevent every reader from judging rashly, and at all hands, if possible, be indulg'd a fair hearing; let it here be observ'd, that in the sentiments I profess, I am not alone, but therein I go along with some learned men, that are differently regarded by different persons. 'Tis needless to mention a great many, that seem to favour my opinion; I shall only instance in a few.

JUSTIN MARTYR, in his search after truth, having before he embraced the *Christian* institution, for which he suffered *martyrdom*, gone through all the different sects of philosophers, that were then of any note in the world, may well be allowed not an ill judge, how far mankind,

kind, in the bare exercise of these rational powers, had gone, or were able to go, towards discovering the *being of God, the creation of man, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments*: and with respect to all these articles, as I have observed in the course of the enquiry, he expressly declares, that *neither by nature nor by human wit is it possible for mankind to discover things so great and divine; but we must know them from the gift of revelation deriv'd from above to holy men*^b. Eusebius maintains the same doctrine through the whole of his *evangelical preparation*. From the quotations I have transcrib'd it appears, that Mr. *Arnauld* and Mr. *Bayle* are of the same opinion. And, "he that thinks to prove, *says Mr. Shuckford*^c, that the world ever did in fact by
" *wisdom know God*, that any nation upon earth,
" or any set of men, did from the principles
" of reason, *only*, without any assistance from
" revelation, find out the true nature, and the
" true worship of the Deity, must find out
" some history of the world, entirely different
" from all the accounts which the present sa-
" cred or prophane writers do give us, or his
" opinion must appear to be a mere guess and
" conjecture of what is barely possible, but
" what all history assures us was never real-
" ly done in the world". In general, says
" *Calvin, we apprehend a divinity, and then we*

^b Ad Grac. Cohort. § 8. prophane hist. B. v. p. 365.
& alib. vol. 1.

^c Connect. of the sacred and

conclude,

conclude, that whatever it be, it is to be worshipped. But here our understanding, or our rational powers fail us, ere one can come to discern, either who is God, or what is God, *Concipimus divinitatem: deinde eam, quæcunque est, colendam esse ratiocinamur. Sed hic deficit sensus noster, antequam assequatur aut quis aut qualis sit Deus*^d. And in another place, *verum est, says he, hunc mundum theatri instar esse, in quo nobis Dominus conspicuam gloriæ suæ figuram exhibet. Nos tamen, quum tale spectaculum nobis ante oculos pateat, cæcuti-mus, non quia obscura est revelatio, sed quia nos mente alienati sumus: nec voluntas tantum, sed facultas etiam ad eam rem nos deficit. — Eatenus in schola naturæ universali proficiunt homines, ut sensu aliquo divinitatis tangantur; sed qualis sit Deus ignorant; imo mox evanescunt in suis cogitationibus. Ita lux in tenebris lucet. — Ut impleatur illud, — Neminem unquam, natura duce, eousque esse progressum ut Deum cognosceret*^e. Of the same opinion is Mr. Halyburton in his treatise against *deism*^f. So that when one finds

^d Calv. in Rom. i. 20.

^e Id. in 1 Cor. i. 21.

^f My claiming an interest in Calvin upon this article leads me to reflect, that some people are pleased to alledge, that the opinion I profess is held by the Socinians. But, without considering the common practice of clapping odious names upon principles, I would only beg leave to observe, that the Socinians, and others that are here thought to be concerned, take upon them to hold, that the

works of creation and providence do not afford sufficient evidences, upon which a man can reasonably conclude the being and perfections of God: which is an opinion absolutely false in itself, and totally different from that which I have explain'd. For while I openly avow, that from the works of creation and providence, the being and perfections of God, may be unanswerably demonstrated (for which purpose I have given a hint of some ar-
himself

himself among so much good company of different characters, one may hope from every reader, to be favour'd with some degree of attention. And let me have leave to take notice, that in my *further explications*, page 37, before the *committee for purity of doctrine*, I have made it abundantly plain from the case of Dr. Jenkin; " That most learned men, who now seem to " oppose my opinion, would have certainly in " the course of their studies distinctly perceiv'd " it, and openly declared for it, had not their

guments, and quoted some authors, whose excellent writings put the matter beyond question) I only pretend to hold, that mankind, wholly left to the exercise of their own rational powers, are not able of themselves, without foreign instructions, to discover those evidences upon which the certainty of that truth is founded. Indeed the ingenious Mr. Crousaz represents the Socinian opinion in so vague and loose a manner, that the opinion I maintain may likewise be included. But from that learned man's reasoning, and all the objections he makes use of, it appears manifest, that he has only in his eye that particular opinion, wherein it is affirmed, that from the nature of things there arises no sensible demonstration of the being and perfections of the deity: (see his *Traité de l'Educat. des Enfans*, sect. 6. p. 371, &c. tom. 2.) and as for the other opinion, wherein, as I apprehend, I am justified by so many

learned men, particularly by Calvin, one should think that Mr. Crousaz does rather elsewhere expressly declare for it.

Plus, says he, qu'on étudie la nature, plus on se trouve pénétré des lumières qui en sortent, mieux aussi on comprend la nécessité où étoit le genre humain des lumières d'une revelation, puisque l'expérience de tant de siècles a fait voir que les hommes ne savoiént, ou ne vouloient tirer de leur raison, que des instructions très imparfaites, & très insuffisantes. On sait qu'on doit au secours de la revelation les lumières mêmes dont on est éclairé par la nature; & non seulement la revelation est cause que nous tournons, & que nous arrêtons nôtre vuë sur des objets, & sur des considérations qui nous auroient échappé, ou sur lesquelles nous n'aurions fait que glisser légèrement; elle donne encore à toutes les conséquences, que nous en tirons, un degré de certitude qui les rend d'une toute autre efficace. Trait. du Beau, chap. 9. § 14. p. 412. tom. 1.

" attention

“ attention been prevented or biaſſed by the
 “ contrary opinion; in which we are train’d
 “ up from our youth in our common philoſo-
 “ phy, and which appears very plauſible, al-
 “ moſt demonſtrably true in *ſpeculation*”. I
 ſay, I would therefore gladly hope, that every
 ſincere lover of truth will carefully examine
 into this important argument.

INDEED the labour of the mind, or a cloſe
 intention of thought in the purſuit of hidden
 truth, is an exerciſe whereof moſt people are
 not extremely fond; ſuch are the diſpoſitions of
 the greater part of the world, that in their ſe-
 veral different ſchemes of religion and morality,
 they chooſe to leave a *few others* to think for them,
 and content themſelves with ſubmitting to their
 authority; frequently ſhifting from one ſcheme
 to another, as their own temper or prejudices
 may happen to alter, or as another man’s au-
 thority may chance to prevail. And how
 ſhamefully mean muſt one reckon it, when men
 that ſet up for freedom of thought, for wit,
 and abſtracted reaſoning, do not ſee with their
 own eyes, but prostitute themſelves to authority,
 and declare in favour of an opinion, or a ſet of
 principles, which they have not themſelves im-
 partially examined, and whereof they do not im-
 mediately perceive the naked truth and certainty?
 ’Tis, however, not a little obvious, that perſons
 of all denominations, do come, in great num-
 bers, into this unmanly and diſhonourable proſti-
 tution, and betake themſelves to a ſide with no
 little

little zeal and keeness, without the engagement of a rational conviction.

I AM far from thinking that all who profess themselves *Christians* are free from the reproach of this imputation: I doubt not but a great many do believe the truth of the *gospel*, while they never yet examined into the grounds of their faith; and I hope I may be allowed the same freedom with respect to *deists*, and own, I violently suspect, that not a few of this character have embraced their religious sentiments without examination, and must bear the shame of being led by authority in declaring against the truth of the *Christian* institutions. 'Tis likely some people will imagine, that *christians* are not so much to be blamed for declaring themselves in favour of their religion, before any previous enquiry: from their tender years they are educated in the principles they profess, and as presumption that our ancestors will not willingly impose falsehoods on their posterity, may in some sort justify, or excuse the *indolence* of human nature, and serve as an apology for peoples saving themselves the trouble of a narrow search into the religious sentiments of their forefathers. But for men to *renounce* the religion wherein they have been bred, and to go over to

ε After a great many reflections, shewing, from p. 474. how much *faith* prevails among *philosophers* themselves, *Theodoret* comes to this conclusion: Οὐκ ἔστιν, says he, ὁ φιλόσοφος, κοινὸν τι χρεῖμα πάντων ἢ πίσις, ἢ τῶν

μαθῶν τὰ τέχνη ἐπιστήμην, ἢ τῶν πολιούτων, ἢ γεωργούντων, ἢ ἰατροῖς προσεδρευόντων ἢ ἰ γυνώσις, ἢ πάντων, ἀλλὰ μόνων τῶν τὰς τέχνας ἐπισκευμένων. Græc. Affect. Curat. Sermon. 10 p. 481. oper. tom. 4.

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a new set of principles, without having first made a most accurate inquiry into the nature and truth of things; seems to me to be a most unworthy piece of conduct, and to derive no little infamy upon every man, who thus heinously affronts common sense and understanding. If it is the glory of a rational being, to perceive the truth of things, and to form his conduct upon it; if only in this manner we can secure our honour and happiness, what business have we with authority? Why should a name, however celebrated, carry us away as a most convincing argument? In any matter under debate, we ought not, says Cicero^b; *to consider authority, but the force of reason and argument.* And, he very well observes, *that the authority of those who pretend to teach, is a disadvantage to those who incline to learn; for these neglecting to interpose their own judgment, they hold that to be true which they find is approved of by those whom they regard.* Must not every man of sense condemn the Pythagoreans for pretending to establish their principles by the mere authority of their master? One's pity can't but be moved at the folly of those men, who imagine, 'tis sufficient evidence of the truth of any point of doctrine, when they simply affirm (ΑΥΤΟΣ ΕΦΑ) *himself said it*, or religiously swear (ταῦτα ἔτις ἔχει ΝΗ ΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ) *by himself it is so*^c.

WERE we to manage our religious debates, (*ah our shameful guilt!*) as they do their affairs

^b Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1. cap. 5.

^c Hieroc. in Car. Pythag. p. 225.

in civil courts, where the pleaders have not so much in view the discovery of truth, as carrying their cause, or gaining the victory, we might then set up upon the foot of authority, and declare for opinions as *names* may appear great and bulky in our imagination. But where we honestly intend to search out, and embrace the truth, of what consequence is a name or many names in our enquiries and reasoning? Has not truth very often been over-powered by the joint verdict of many false witnesses, and those too that seem to be somewhat *k*? *Polus* endeavour'd to maintain the argument against *Socrates* by force of authority; but how nobly does this great man assert the dignity of his nature on this occasion? "I know, *says he*¹, you can lead
 " witnesses against me, that will concur with
 " you in condemning what I say, and in main-
 " taining what you affirm. But I, a single
 " man, do by no means concur with you; for
 " you do not force me by strength of reason;
 " but producing many false witnesses against
 " me, you attempt to *cast me out of my property*,
 " to rob me of truth. For my part, if I do not
 " engage you yourself, a single witness, to con-
 " fess the truth of what I say, I shall think,
 " that nothing considerable has been done in
 " the question between us; nor, in my opinion,
 " will you perform any great matter, unless I,
 " a single person, give you my testimony, so
 " that you may dismiss all other witnesses what-

¹ Plat. in Gorg. p. 471. E. U. I.

¹ Id. ib. p. 472. A.

"ever". Thus *Socrates* gloriously declares for an *impartial* search into the nature of things, as the only standard whereby one can judge of the truth of an argument ^m. And one should think that of all men living a *freethinker* acts most out of character, when in any instance he suffers himself to be led by authority, or espouses a side before he has made a narrow scrutiny. Happy would it be for mankind, could those who pretend to reasoning be prevail'd on, to follow this sober and honest course of judging in matters of religion, and never to declare themselves of any side, till they shall find sufficient reasons to induce them, and that they cannot but yield to the truth and reality of things. If this conduct should happen to fail of bringing us to agree in the same sentiments, it would, at least, engage us to bear with one another, and notwithstanding our different opinions, still to maintain brotherly love and charity, without spoiling the beauty of human friendship and society ⁿ.

Of all the attempts that have been made to discredit the truth of the *Christian* revelation, the most plausible, that which seems to be the

^m *Homo naturæ minister & interpret, tantum facit, & intelligit; quantum de naturæ ordine, opere vel mente observaverit; nec amplius scit, aut potest.* Verul. Nov. Organ. lib. 1. aphor. 1.

ⁿ I wish this may not be the character of some of our modern deists: 'Αντί γὰρ οἱ ὑδὲ ἀνέχονται τὴν ἀρχὴν ἱκανῶσαι τὴν ἀρχὴν

ἀληθείαν περιεργασίαν· ἐν δὲ φλυαρίῳ ἐπιχειροῦσι, βλασφημίας τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἀχρεΐους λόγους, σφίσι αὐτοῖς τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ὄντων ἰγνώσκοντες συλχευόμενοι, ὡς μαθόντες, ὡς ζητήσαντες, ὡς ποιήσαντες, ὡς ἐννοήσαντες τὴν ἀκαταλόγητον θεϊκὴν σοφίαν· οἱ δὲ οὐκ ἔχουσιν τὴν ἀκαταλόγητον σοφίαν τῆς διαθεσῆς. Clem. Alexandr. Strom. lib. 7. lib. 762. B.

most

most taking, and which in all likelihood will gain the greatest ground, is the argument that pretends to prove the *sufficiency of human reason to human happiness*, and to all the ends and purposes of religion. “ If God never intended mankind should at any time be without religion, “ or have false religions; and there be but one “ true religion, which all have been ever bound “ to believe and profess, I can’t see any *heterodoxy* in affirming, that the means to effect “ this end of infinite wisdom, must be as universal and extensive as the end itself, or that “ all men, at all times, must have had sufficient means to discover, whatever God design’d they should know and practise. I do “ not mean by this, that all should have equal “ knowledge, but that all should have what is “ sufficient for the circumstances they are in. “ — And as I think it my duty never to disown “ my religious sentiments, so I freely declare “ that the *use of those faculties*, by which men “ are distinguish’d from brutes, is *the only means* “ they have to discern whether there is a God; “ and whether he concerns himself with human affairs, or has given them any laws, “ and what those laws are? And as men have “ no other faculties to judge with, so their “ using these after the best manner they can, “ must answer the end for which God gave “ them, and justify their conduct: for if God “ will judge mankind as they are accountable, “ that is, as they are rational, the judgment “ must hold an exact proportion to the use they “ make

“ make of their reason.—And if God design’d
 “ that all mankind should know, what he wills
 “ them to know, believe, profess, and practise,
 “ and hath given them no other means for this
 “ but the use of reason; reason, human rea-
 “ son must then be the means; for as God has
 “ made us rational creatures, and reason tells
 “ us that ’tis his will, that we act up to the
 “ dignity of our natures; so ’tis reason must
 “ tell when we do so. What God requires
 “ us to know, believe, profess, and practise,
 “ must be in itself a reasonable service; but
 “ whether what is offered to us as such be really
 “ so, ’tis by reason alone we must judge; as the
 “ eye is the sole judge of what is visible, the
 “ ear of what is audible, so reason of what is
 “ reasonable. If then reason was given men to
 “ bring them to the knowledge of God’s will,
 “ that must be sufficient to produce its intend-
 “ ed effect, and can never bring men to take
 “ that for his will, which he designed they,
 “ by using their reason, should avoid as con-
 “ trary to it.

“ If then it be absurd to suppose, that men,
 “ tho’ they liv’d ever so impiously and immo-
 “ rally, could do nothing which God has for-
 “ bid them, or if ever so piously and virtu-
 “ ously could not do any thing God has com-
 “ manded them; must there not have always
 “ been an universal law so fully promulgated to
 “ mankind, that they could have no just plea
 “ from their ignorance not to be try’d by it?
 “ and consequently, nothing less than its being
 “ founded

“ founded on the nature of things, and the re-
 “ lation they stand in to God and one another,
 “ visible at all times to all mankind, could
 “ make it thus universally promulgated. But
 “ further to illustrate this matter, can it be
 “ imagin’d, that if God has been so good to all
 “ other animals, as to give them, not in one
 “ country only, but in all places whatsoever,
 “ sufficient means to act for their own preserva-
 “ tion, that he has had less kindness for the *immor-*
 “ *tal* souls of those made after his own image,
 “ and has not given them at one time, as well
 “ as another, and at one place, as well as an-
 “ other, sufficient means to provide for their
 “ *eternal* happiness? Or can it be supposed, an
 “ infinitely good and gracious being, which
 “ gives men notice by their senses what does
 “ good or hurt to their bodies, has had less
 “ regard for their *immortal* parts, and has not
 “ given them at all times by the light of the
 “ understanding, sufficient means to discover
 “ what makes for the good of their souls, but
 “ has necessitated them, or any of them, to
 “ continue from age to age in destructive ig-
 “ norance or error? ”

THESE are speculations that seem extremely
plausible; and when a man of a lively wit sets
 forth at the same time the *bigotry* and *super-*
stition, which alas! in all ages have too much
 prevail’d among *Christians*; and describes the
 religious differences that have happen’d in the

christian world, one while about *mysteries*, and another while about very *trifles*; and represents the rage and fury wherewith they have been obstinately managed, amidst all the dismal effects of violence and persecution, pouring in upon mankind confusion, misery and destruction, in open violation of the eternal laws of universal love and righteousness, that are of infinitely greater consequence to rational beings, than the knowledge of *all mysteries* ^p whatsoever; 'tis no great wonder that people who are soon led away by fair appearances, do immediately conceive a prejudice at the *Christian* institution, and declare in favour of the light of nature; giving out, *the world needs no revelation*. But I would fain hope I may have the good fortune to prevail with some of these gentlemen, to lay aside prejudice and all regard to authority, and to go along with me in an impartial examination of this argument. 'Tis impossible, that the author of this opinion could ever have formed a wish, that mankind would come *blindly* into his sentiments, without being led by the evidence of things. And why should we prostitute ourselves to a man's authority, who would heartily despise us for the mean unmanly compliance? Let us therefore exert our rational faculties, and have the resolution to search after truth ourselves, that we may see it with our own eyes, and have the exquisite pleasure of

imbracing it by itself¹. I confess I am a *Christian*, and may be thought a party concerned, and therefore not so fit a person to lead in this enquiry: but as I have already publish'd to the world the reasons of my faith, so, I hope, I have not yet forfeited my title to ingenuity, and the character I could wish to bear, a *lover of truth*, how much soever it may expose one to the angry passions of other people. And if I may judge from the fate of my oration *de vanitate luminis naturæ*, I am afraid that the following argument will gain me but a very moderate share in the kind affections of some *divines* and *philosophers*. But be that as it will, I say, I presume to flatter myself, that the candid reader, of what denomination soever, will regard no character on either side of the question, but sincerely follow the honest rule, laid down by *Socrates*; *by no means, says he², consider who says it; but whether the thing said be true or false.*

As I have already hinted, the argument I propose to examine, is given out in a late book, entitled, *Christianity as old as the creation*, where in the author maintains, that “As mankind
“ can be bound to no religion, but to the reli-
“ gion of nature, which is the great and the only
“ means of human happiness; so all men are
“ fully able of themselves, without the affi-

¹ Διὰ πλείονος τοίνυν φροντίδος καὶ εὐμενίας τε καὶ μνήμης. Clem.
ἐρωτηθέντων τὴν τῶν ὄντων ἀλήθειαν, Alex. Strom. l. 7. p. 754. C.
ἢ μόνῃ περὶ τῆς ὁγμῶς ὄντα Θεὸν Plat. in Charmid. p. 161. C.
καταγίνεται ὡς οὐκ ἐπὶ γλυ- vol. 2.

“ stance of foreign instruction, to discover all
 “ those articles of natural religion, that are
 “ necessary to their happiness; since they are
 “ clearly founded in the nature of things, and
 “ lye obvious to the meanest capacity: nor can
 “ a wise and good God impose on mankind any
 “ thing relating to religion, that is not discover-
 “ able by the human mind, or that is not im-
 “ mediately founded in the nature of things.
 “ So that if a scheme of religion should be
 “ offered to the world, wherein there are con-
 “ tained religious articles of faith, or manners,
 “ that lye beyond human discovery, or have
 “ no immediate foundation in nature, but are
 “ positive institutions, depending on will and
 “ authority; such a system of things can never
 “ be admitted as a divine revelation”. This,
 in my apprehension, is the grand argument
 maintain’d by the author I have in view, where-
 by he means to demonstrate, and from whence
 he would conclude, that the *Christian* religion,
 which contains articles *beyond* human discovery,
 and enjoyns *positive* institutions, could not pos-
 sibly have come from God.

I SUPPOSE it appears from the hints I have
 given above, concerning the *plausibility* of this
 opinion, which represents mankind as fully able
 of themselves to discover the whole compass of
 natural religion, at least as far as things are ne-
 cessary to promote their eternal happiness;
 I say, from those hints it appears, that the au-
 thor of this opinion has entered into a *specula-*
tion vastly entertaining, and that cannot but
 prove

prove extremely agreeable to every contemplative mind. All along in his book, this author seems to set before us the moral perfections of the Deity, and the natural abilities of human minds, in great harmony conspiring together to secure the immortal happiness of human kind; and who can attend to such a prospect without being highly delighted? But, I would beg to be informed, what is the nature of this delightful prospect, that is here afforded me? Is it only a curious *speculation*, a beautiful scheme of things, no where to be found but in the amusements of a recluse philosopher? Or when we look into human nature, and search about as in the world, do we find every article answered *in fact*, and fully verified in reality? If it is possible to inform ourselves about the nature and state of things by a course of experiments, or from particular facts really existing; one should think it as absurd as it is dangerous, to go about to determine the nature and state of things by mere *speculation*.*

Do but reflect upon the speculations of philosophers concerning the formation of the uni-

* Nous ne devons pas compter entre les principes de la religion, ce que nous paroît simplement propre à les affermir, ni rechercher la maniere dont nous l'établirons, si cela dependoit de nous, & la maniere dont il nous semble que Dieu auroit dû l'établir; mais nous devons considerer les choses en elles-mêmes, telles qu'elles sont présentement, & apprendre par

les faits ce que Dieu a voulu, au lieu de régler les faits sur ce qu'il nous semble que Dieu a dû vouloir. Les libertins, qui voyent que pour soutenir la liberté de la religion, on a fait de longs raisonnemens de metaphysique, qui ne prouvent souvent rien, prennent occasion de traiter toutes les preuves de simples suppositions. Crouf. Logiq. Part III. chap. ii. p. 50. tom. 4.

24 Prefatory INTRODUCTION.

verse, and in accounting for the *phænomena* in nature; they are indeed, some of them, abundantly ingenious, and seem wonderfully amusing. But how vain, and fanciful do they appear, how very *romantick*, since the world became sensible of the folly of forming *hypotheses* at random, and were taught to judge of things by *experiments*, and to build their speculations upon real facts and observations? And as *natural* philosophy was little better than all over fable and *romance*, while people indulged themselves in mere speculation; so *moral* philosophy

* *Qui speculationum suarum fundamentum desumunt ab hypothesebus, etiamsi deinde secundum leges mechanicas accuratissime procedant; fabulam quidem elegantem forte & venustam, fabulam tamen concinnare dicendi sunt. — Ad veram philosophiam pertinet rerum naturas ex causis vere existentibus derivare: eas vero leges querere quibus voluit summus opifex hunc mundi pulcherrimum ordinem stabilire; non eas quibus potuit, si ita visum fuisset. Cotes in Præf. ad Newt. Princip.*

In particular, how much freedom people use with the perfections of God, in making them subservient to the supporting of an *hypothesis*, one may learn from the conduct of no less a man than Mr. *Leibnitz*, who from thence goes about to prove an *absolute plenum*, and that there is no such thing as *atoms*, but every particle of matter is actually subdivided in

infinitum. “To omit, says Mr. “*Leibnitz*, many other arguments against a vacuum and “*atoms*, I shall here mention “those which I ground upon “God’s perfection, and upon “the necessity of a sufficient reason. I lay it down as a principle, that every perfection, “which God could impart to “things without derogating “from their other perfections, “has actually been imparted “to them. Now, let us fancy “a space wholly empty, God “could have placed some matter in it, without derogating “in any respect from all other things: therefore he “hath actually placed some “matter in that space: therefore, there is no space wholly “empty: therefore all is full. “The same argument proves “that there is no corpuscle, “but what is subdivided, &c.” *Leib. and Clarke’s Letters*, p. 117.

has

has greatly suffer'd by the same fanciful humour among mankind: it requires no great acquaintance with religion, natural or reveal'd, to be able to shew, that the speculations of men concerning the perfections of God, as they conceive them to be employ'd about mankind, are not only various and different, but attended with consequences not a little hurtful and mischievous. Every man of reflection, that knows any thing of the world, must have observ'd thus much in many instances. And therefore, I must still say, if by any means we can have access to explain the nature and state of things, by enquiring into the things themselves, and narrowly observing their real powers and operations; this certainly is the method we ought to follow, as by far safer and more rational, than first to form an *hypothesis* or scheme in our minds, and then give out things as we apprehend they must answer our speculations^v.

I PRESUME it is obvious, that the learned author of *Christianity as old as the creation*, does not pretend to shew by experiments, *real facts* and observations, that mankind without *supernatural* revelation are actually possess'd of the knowledge

^v *Restat vero nobis modus tradendi unus & simplex, ut homines ad ipsa particularia, & eorum series & ordines adducamus; & ut illi rursus imperent sibi abnegationem notionum, & cum rebus ipsis consuescere incipiant.* Noy. Organ. lib. 1. aphor. 36. Dans une infinité d'occasions rien ne seroit plus ridicule que ce raisonnement :

Dieu a fait les choses en ordre, donc il les a fait telles que je me plais à les imaginer: on trouvera pourtant, si on y pense bien, que c'est là le principe d'une infinité de chimères qu'on debite tres serieusement, &c. Crouf. Logiq. Part IV. chap. iii p. 258. tom. 4.

of natural religion, in all its essential articles necessary to human happiness; or that mankind have in truth and reality sufficient powers and abilities, of themselves to make the discovery. Perhaps something of this nature is proposed to be done in his *next conference*, wherein he is to shew, that "all mankind, *Jews, Gentiles, Mahometans, &c.* agree, in owning the sufficiency of the law of nature, to make men acceptable to God". Mean while, every man who has read his book will acknowledge, he as yet only raises his *speculations* to contemplate the divine nature; and apprehending such particular perfections in God, which he conceives must certainly operate upon mankind, in deriving to them such particular favours and blessings; from hence, without scruple, he pronounces that mankind are certainly in possession of sufficient powers and abilities, to discover and understand the religion of nature: but, as an ingenious author observes, *why climb up into heaven to enquire whether man has two eyes or one — whether they are placed behind or before?* I appeal to any thinking person, whether the only sure, certain, and rational way of coming to understand the particular powers inherent to human nature, is not to look narrowly into human nature itself, and carefully to observe the real effects that in any age it has produc'd? Strongly to affirm, or to shew by plausible arguments, that the *justice, goodness*, and other perfections of God, do loudly proclaim that human powers are most certainly adapted to such particular

particular purposes, may well enough serve an *hypothesis* of our own framing: but if, upon strict examination, we shall find that truth and *fact*, as they appear in things themselves, go directly cross to our *speculations*; what will our strong assertions then signify, or all the beauty of our plausible arguments? I am afraid that this sort of conduct is liable to some severe reflections, and that it may be call'd a going *beyond our reach*, and prescribing to a being of infinite perfections; nor am I without fears, that *facts* and *speculations*, thus running counter to one another, may have a bad influence upon mankind, and in some instances, produce *atheism*^w. Must not the prospect of such danger put every sober man upon his guard, and make him extremely wary in forming speculations concerning the perfections of God, as they may be supposed to affect or influence the nature of rational beings, in any particular instances, whereof we have access to know the truth and certainty, from real facts and observations? "I think it, says Mr. Locke, a very good argument to say, the infinitely wise God hath made it so, and therefore it is best. But it seems to me a little too much confidence of our own wisdom, to say I think it best; and therefore God has made it so." And in the matter in hand, it will be in vain to argue from such a topick, that God hath done so, if certain experience shall shew us, that he hath not.

^w Vide Halyburt. Natu- chap. iv. p. 51. chap. xiii.
ral Religion insufficient, &c. p. 230.

What the judicious Mr. *Hooker* observes in another case, by a little variation, may here very fitly be apply'd. "As for those marvellous discourses, whereby people, *says he*, adventure to argue, that God must needs have done the thing which they imagine was to be done; I must confess, I have often wondered at their exceeding boldness herein: when the question is, Whether God has *endowed mankind* (as they affirm he hath) *with a capacity of themselves to find out the essential articles of natural religion*; Why take they that other, both presumptuous and superfluous labour, to prove he should have done it; there being no way in this case to prove the deed of God, saving only by producing that evidence wherein he hath done it? But if there be no such thing apparent *in fact or experience*, they do as if one should demand a legacy by force and virtue of some written testament, wherein there being no such thing specify'd, he pleadeth, that there must needs be, and bringeth arguments from the love or good will, which always the testator bore him, imagining, that these or the like proofs will convict a testament to have that in it, which other men can no where by reading find ^x."

'Tis in a course of repeated experiments carefully made, that one may hope to arrive at certain knowledge in matters of natural philosophy; 'tis upon such experiments that learned

^x Ecclesiast. Polit. B. III. p. 155.

men do now safely venture to establish common laws or rules for determining the force, and explaining the operations of inanimate bodies. And will it not prove our safest way to follow the same course, in matters that concern moral philosophy; and from facts and experiments to endeavour to determine, what one may call the religious powers and abilities of intelligent beings? I cannot but rest assured, that every considerate man will freely own *this method is fair and rational*. I confess, if in any considerable instances, we shall happen to find human nature extremely weak or insufficient, quite unequal to what we apprehend it should be adapted; we may then come to be involved in some very great difficulties, how to explain the perfections and providence of God; and that men are accountable for their actions. But for my part, I always chuse to leave those things among the many *mysteries*, that every where, and in every scheme, occur to me, without my being able to unravel them; well knowing, as *Theodoret* expresses it, that *the ocean of God's wisdom and providence is unnavigable to poor mortals*; wherein presumptuous men rashly venture and suffer shipwreck. And I prefer this method far before the offering any *speculation* that includes facts, or infers things really existing, which in search-

De Provid. Orat. 13. in init.
His advice near the end of this excellent discourse is extremely just: ὁ θεὸς, says he, οἰκονομῶν τὰς μὲν φαινομένας προσκυ-

νέετε, τὰς δὲ κρυπτομένας μὴ πολυπραψμονεῖτε, ἀλλ' ἀναρῶναι τὴν μάθησιν εἰς καιρὸν ἰσορροῦν· ὅταν ἀποδυσώμεθα τὰ πάθη, τότε τὴν γέλοισιν γνώσιν λαμβόμεθα.

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ing are not to be found, and to my full conviction have no truth or reality. In all this, I would fain think, I have the approbation of the impartial reader. "Whatsoever, *says a very judicious writer*, is spoken of God, or things appertaining to God, otherwise than as the truth is, though it seem an honour, it is an injury". Wherefore in matters which concern the actions of God, the most dutiful way on our part, is to search what God hath done, and with meekness to admire *that*, rather than to dispute what he in congruity of reason ought to do.—When we do otherwise, surely we exceed our bounds; who, and where we are, we forget. And therefore needful it is, that our pride, in such cases be controuled, and our disputes beaten back with those demands of the blessed apostle, *how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out? Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who was his counsellor?*"

So that judging it much safer and fairer, to determine the religious powers and abilities of human nature from *facts*, and experiments found among mankind, than from any *speculations* concerning the perfections and providence of God; "I shall here enquire, with all the exactness I can, into human nature, and consider those facts that may shew us the extent of human knowledge with respect to matters of religion, or how far mankind

^z Hooker Ecclesiast. Polit. B. II. sub. fin.

^a Id. ibid. B. III. sub fin.

seem

“ seem able to go of themselves, without revelation and all foreign assistance, in discovering the religion of nature: from whence we may come to judge, whether human reason, or any power or faculty inherent in our nature, is sufficient by itself to the great purposes of religion and happiness: and whether the *Christian* institution is therefore an *imposture*, because it contains articles not discoverable by the human mind.” And when we shall have come thus far, perhaps it may be found needless, to consider our author’s opinion concerning *positive precepts* or *institutions*; and to shew that a religion, which enjoins such precepts, cannot thereby forfeit its pretensions to divinity. But before we begin, we must have leave to explain some things which may serve to bring us to our main argument with greater advantage.

SECT. I

S E C T. I.

Natural religion is so called, because it is founded in the nature of things. It is briefly explain'd. And declar'd to be eternal and immutable, and the great foundation of all social peace and happiness in both worlds.

THE reader will immediately perceive, that the very design, which I here give out of enquiring into the *extent* of human knowledge with respect to natural religion, seems to infer, at least, a *possibility* that mankind may be found ignorant of the great principles or essential articles of natural religion, and not capable of themselves to discover them; so that one may think, "is not this quite inconsistent with the very terms made use of in the argument? Do we not speak of *natural* religion in contradiction to *reveal'd* religion; and mean by the former, a religion which all men do of themselves naturally find out and discern; while they come to the knowledge of the other by *foreign* instruction and information?" I confess, if this be the meaning we must necessarily affix to the term *natural religion*, that the following enquiry would be quite needless, and wholly trifling. But I hope the reader will be pleased to lay aside those *ideas* for a while, and without considering

considering the religion of nature as discoverable by mankind left to themselves, will understand that we here speak of *natural* religion, as a religion which is founded in the nature of things, their several properties and relations; and that only on this account, we here call it *natural*. And thus far methinks I may well be indulg'd, when other people, who speak of God's having placed or *written the laws of nature in our hearts*, do yet seem to say, that mankind do not *naturally* or of themselves come to discover them. Of this opinion, as I apprehend, is the learned Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*^b. So

^b *Duct. Dubitant*. B. II. chap. i. p. 235, 258. The common opinion that the laws of nature are originally *engraven in human minds*, and that mankind do from hence naturally come to the knowledge of them, without having need of foreign instruction, has engaged some people, who have been pleased to examine and condemn my *oration*, to express themselves very unhandfomely against me. So that I must here beg leave to recommend to their consideration, these reflections of Dr. *Parker* upon this article.

“As to the sufficiency, says *this learned man*, of the publication of the law of nature, the plain account of it has been obscured by nothing more than that it has always been described, and discoursed of in *metaphorical* and allusive expressions, such as, *engrawings* and *inscriptions*, and *the tables*

“*of the heart*, &c. As if the law of nature consisted of a certain number of propositions, that were imprinted upon the minds of men, and *concreated* with their understandings; by attending to, and reflecting upon which, they were instructed or bound to govern their moral actions. Perhaps this may be true, and God may possibly have put some secret notices into the minds of men, for the greater security of justice and honesty in the world; but then, besides that there is no way to prove the certainty, or demonstrate the obligation of any such inward record, this plainly resolves the authority of the law of nature into uncertain and unaccountable principles, or such as may be pretended, and when they are, ought to be admitted

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that

that the first and truly genuine religion of mankind, being understood to bear the name *natural*, not because it lyes naturally obvious to the

“ without any proof or evidence of reason: and this amounts to no more than all the idle and precarious pretences of *Enthusiasm*; and whatsoever some men affirm, or fancy to be written upon their hearts, must immediately pass an obligation upon all mens actions, and the finger of God may be as wildly pleaded in all cases that are not to be accounted for by the principles of natural reason and conscience, as the spirit of God has been. But tho’ *that* influences the minds of men with secret and undiscernible impressions, yet it must not be made use of to warrant the lawfulness of any undertaking; but that must be decided by the common and avowed rules of virtue and religion; because it is certain that the spirit of God always acts according to their intendment and direction: so that by them we must judge of its impulses, and not suffer ourselves to be determined in any affair, but where they will abet or justify our proceedings, whether we really are or are not acted by any other principle; otherwise there could be no certain rule of moral actions.

“ And thus too, may men that are bold and confident call every thing the law of

“ nature, that they have a mind or fancy to, without being bound to give any proof of its reasonableness, or account of its obligation. It is no more but calling it the law written in their hearts, and then it must, right or wrong, pass for the universal law of mankind: so that after this rate, there will remain no certain method whereby we may discern mens own fancies, prejudices, and inclinations, from the true dictates of right reason, and the natural grounds of good and evil.

“ And therefore these phrases are not to be taken in exact propriety of speech, but only in a loose and popular way of expression; and so they were intended by those that first used them, that only alluded to the known customs and solemnities of enacting laws, that were always wont to be declared and publish’d to the subject, by writing or proclamation; and in allusion to this they came to describe the law of nature, by the voice within, the book of conscience, the tables of the heart, &c. because the laws of nature are as certainly declared reasonable, and obligatory by the state of nature, as if they had been written upon our minds by the finger observation

observation of human minds destitute of all foreign instruction, which is the point I propose to be discussed; but because it is *founded in the nature of things*: I shall here make some reflections, that may serve to explain, what sort of institution this religion of nature is, to which human powers, if we are capable of making a successful enquiry in such matters, must be proportioned and adapted, so as to enable us to search it out and discern it.

As for natural religion itself, (taking it in a practical view, as it always should) "It is, as
" I apprehend, a system of duties arising
" from the nature of things, which we
" owe to God, and which we ought to ob-
" serve towards our fellow men, from a regard
" to God, and with a view of thereby ap-

" of God, or proclaim'd by an
" audible voice to our con-
" sciences." *Park. Demonstr. of*
the law of nature, § 2. To this
let me add the opinion of an
author whose authority, I hope,
(since reason must not pretend
to do all) will have some weight
with those persons I have in
view.

" The gentiles, says the pious
" and worthy Prof. Halyburton,
" all of them, do by nature those
" things, that is, the material
" part of those duties, which
" the law of nature enjoins;
" which shews the work of the
" law, or some part of it at least,
" to be written in their hearts,
" since they do some things it
" enjoins. I do not think,

" that this writing of the law
" imports innate ideas, or innate
" actual knowledge, which Mr.
" Locke hath been at so much
" pains to disprove, with what
" success I enquire not now.
" But whatever there
" is as to this, neither the ap-
" ples scope, nor words, oblige
" us to maintain them." *Haly-*

burt. Natural Religion insufficient, &c. chap. iii. p. 38.

The ingenious Mr. Crousaz
seems to explain the true reason,
that induces people to apprehend
there are some certain
truths, or maxims, naturally im-
printed on the minds of men.
La Logique, Part II. chap. v. § 6.
p. 257. See Mr. Locke's *Essay*,
B. I. chap. ii. — iv.

“proving ourselves to his favour.” Now, manifest it is, we can never come to the knowledge of those particular duties, which the nature and relations of things prescribe to us, unless we sufficiently understand the particular properties and perfections in those things; what influence they really have upon each other, or what effects they will certainly produce, when they are, as it were, apply’d to one another. So that since *God* and *man* are two things, the beings, or existences, from whose different and several natures, properties, and perfections, when compared and applied to one another, there arise the duties of natural religion; before one can attain to the knowledge of such duties, one must necessarily know the nature of God, and the nature of man, and what influence and effects, the mutual application of these natures, in their distinct and several powers and properties, will certainly have. The author of *Christianity as old as the creation* gives much the same account of things.

“By natural religion I understand, *says he*,
 “the belief of the existence of a God, and
 “the sense and practice of those duties, which
 “result from the knowledge we by our reason
 “have of him, and his perfections; and of
 “ourselves, and our own imperfections, and
 “of the relation we stand in to him, and our
 “fellow creatures; so that the religion of na-
 “ture takes in every thing that is founded on
 “the reason and nature of things.” And,

“ if we consider what our reason will inform
 “ us of the nature of our great creator and
 “ governor, we can’t fail of knowing our
 “ duty, for, as Dr. Scott justly observes, *if you*
 “ *will serve the great king of the world in such*
 “ *ways as are pleasing and acceptable unto him,*
 “ *you must study his nature, and inform your-*
 “ *selves which way his infinite perfections incline,*
 “ *that you may know how to comport yourselves*
 “ *towards him, and to render him such services*
 “ *as are agreeable to his nature; for there is*
 “ *no rule in the world, but only that of his na-*
 “ *ture, by which you can certainly conclude what*
 “ *will please him.*—So that in all our enquiries
 “ what is pleasing to God, our last appeal must
 “ be to his nature, which is the great standard
 “ of good and evil, by which we are to measure
 “ what is pleasing and displeasing to him. If
 “ then, with this judicious author, you allow,
 “ that we are to measure what is pleasing and
 “ displeasing to God, (which takes in the whole
 “ of religion) from what our reason teaches con-
 “ cerning his nature, you allow all I contend
 “ for.^a We are therefore fully agreed, there
 can be no natural religion among mankind with-
 out our having the knowledge of the nature
 of God, his being, and perfections.

WHETHER the human mind, without foreign
 assistance, is able to discover thus much, will
 come afterwards to be considered. I shall only
 now say, ’tis obvious that mankind are at this
 day possessed of as much knowledge of the na-

^a Chap. iii. p. 30.

ture of God, and of man, as is sufficient to enable us to apprehend the great articles of natural religion.

WE know that God, besides whom there is none other, is a pure mind or spirit, every where present, almighty, omniscient, infinitely wise and good; that he is the creator, the preserver, and governor of the universe, in the whole and in all its parts; that he is the sovereign judge of all his rational creatures, and will reward and punish us, every man according to his moral qualities, or those tempers of heart and actions of life, which we here choose to indulge and pursue.

THESE are the notions under which we apprehend the supreme being; and when such representations are set before us, or applied to our minds, they naturally tend to inspire us with *awe, reverence, adoration, love, affiance*, and other devout affections towards God, which are called the duties of natural religion, and which being apply'd or exerted towards the Deity, are most consonant and agreeable to his nature.

AND as to mankind, who all share in one common nature; we know, that the several individuals of this nature have such and such common powers and faculties; are susceptible of such particular pleasures and pains; are capable of such and such improvements in body and mind, and have their happiness depending on such and such particular enjoyments. Nor are we ignorant, that the particular motions or
actions

actions of our mind, that correspond, when applied to our fellow men, with their common powers and faculties, and that contribute to their improvement and happiness, are *love, meekness, gentleness, pity, faith, justice, beneficence*, and such other social affections, as inspire our souls with thoughts and purposes of other people's safety, peace, and prosperity. I say,

THESE are the affections of one's mind, that correspond to human nature in the several individuals of our species; and being the inward springs of our outward actions, they cannot but govern and determine all the motions of one's body, towards the service and interest of one's fellows; so that guided by these principles, we become in all respects sincerely devoted to the common happiness of mankind. And when our minds and bodies are thus composed and employed in beneficent affections, and the external actions that flow from them, imparting happiness to our fellow creatures, with a view of thereby approving ourselves to the favour of God, our common parent, and governour; these affections and actions are likewise called the duties of natural religion: and as they are highly pleasing to God, so they are most acceptable to human kind.

BUT to understand fully the religion of nature, and what weight its duties ought to have upon our minds; 'tis likewise necessary we be apprised, in what manner this religion is guarded, or by what rewards and punishments its duties are enforced upon us. And not to mention the

present pleasures, and pains that are severally the immediate attendants of virtue and vice ;

WE know, that the supreme Governour of the universe has placed mankind here in a state of trial and discipline, subject to his laws and authority ; that he is to bring them to judgment *hereafter*, when without respect of persons he will reward or punish us, according as we have observed or neglected the duties of natural religion.

AND as for those rewards, that righteous men shall have allotted them, they are not made up of the gross pleasures and gratifications of sense ; they lie in the intellectual enjoyments of the mind ; in the refinement and perfection of our social dispositions ; and in all the high elegant joys, that can arise from the society of God, and the company and fellowship of blessed spirits, who shall all be united to us in the most perfect concord, harmony, and friendship : nor will this happy state ever fail us ; it will prove endless, eternal.

ON the other hand, the punishments to which vicious and wicked men shall hereafter be condemned, are fearfully gloomy and afflicting ; they consist in their being excluded from that blessed society above ; in their being given up to anguish and agony, to the blackness of shame and horror, and to suffer all those pains, which the righteous Judge of the world, shall be pleased in his infinite wisdom to inflict upon them.

* See my Enq. into the Orig. of Moral Virtue, § 4. p. 84, 85.

THUS

THUS it is that the observation of the duties of natural religion is secured. And it plainly appears, that no man can neglect them, or prove disobedient, but at the utmost hazard, without being guilty of the extremest folly, and forfeiting his main and highest happiness.

Now from what I have hitherto said concerning the duties of natural religion, I shall make the following observations.

I. THESE duties do not lie in any bodily motions, or in the application of one body to another, after such a particular manner, but *in the inward motions or affections of the mind*, which we employ towards other minds for their interest and benefit, and wherein we correspond and agree with the fixed principles of their nature. So that natural religion does not *immediately* prescribe to us, what sort of external motions or actions we shall observe towards God and man; it only determines the affections of the mind, which regulate all the motions of the human body; nor can any bodily action be counted an observance of natural religion, but as it arises from those affections, wherein one mind corresponds to another, according to their several natures and principles.

2. THE duties of natural religion being no other but those affections of the mind, wherein intelligent beings, according to their several natures, do mutually correspond one with another, to their common safety and happiness; since these duties are thus founded in nature, *they are certainly unchangeable and cannot possibly*
be

be alter'd. 'Tis easy to imagine how the present constitutions of things, whereby the communication of such particular motions to the human body produces certain agreeable perceptions, may so be altered as to produce the quite contrary: but how those motions or affections of the mind, that constitute the duties of natural religion, can fail, when they are applied to other minds, to produce their agreeable effects, or to suit, and correspond with those other intelligent beings towards whom they are exerted, is far beyond one's power to conceive.

3. *THE safety, peace, and happiness of mankind, and of all intelligent agents, depend upon a faithful and steady observance of the duties of natural religion.* In our present circumstances, human minds can have no *immediate* intercourse one without another; all the commerce we can have together is by means of the body: and 'tis very certain, that those motions of the body, that arise from such affections of the mind as are contrary to the commands of natural religion, are destructive to the peace and order of the world; whereas such as arise from those affections, which natural religion makes our duty, do manifestly produce good and happiness; nor can one man, in any instance, prove useful to another, but while he exerts his bodily motions as his mind would direct, under the influence of natural religion. And

4. As mankind do thus become happy in one another, so *by how much our happiness depends upon the favour of God, by so much it likewise*

wife depends upon our observing the duties of natural religion. It must here however be remarked, that we procure our happiness in the favour of God, not always after the same manner, whereby we acquire it in the favour of men. I mean, if our bodily motions (whilst perhaps our inward affections are quite contrary to what may be presum'd from such external actions) tend to promote the good and interest of our fellows; this may prove sufficient to make us happy in their favour. But God having open to his view the most secret thoughts of our minds, if our inward affections be not such as are required by natural religion, all our external acts of devotion towards God, and the most regular and agreeable motions of our body towards man, will never gain us the favour of the Deity. For however among embodied minds, that have not access *immediately* to perceive each others inward affections, one may chance to promote one's happiness by the outward actions of his body *only*, yet among naked minds, intelligent and social beings, that can *immediately* discern one another's thoughts, their mutual happiness can't possibly be obtain'd, without an intercourse of suitable and corresponding affections; so that the observing the laws of natural religion, whereby social minds are united together in mutual concord and friendship, is absolutely necessary to the happiness of mankind, especially as it lies in the favour of God, and in our having our lot with those blessed

fed spirits, to whom one may hope to be associated in another world.

5. In matters of religion, *no point of knowledge or article of faith, no external or bodily motions enjoined by positive institution, can be of any value or moment, unless they promote an observance of natural religion.* So that if any thing can be supposed in the nature of God, or in his dealings with mankind, in the nature of man, or in the relations between God and man, whereof the knowledge has no influence upon our minds to engage and improve us in the study and pursuit of natural religion; such things must be counted of no weight or importance. Indeed the discovery of truth is always agreeable, and the bare perception of such things, as are here supposed to relate to God and man, may afford some pleasure to one's mind by itself: but of what consequence can such things prove with respect to *social* beings, when they produce no *social* happiness, or contribute nothing to heighten and raise our love and devotion towards God, or to excite and enlarge our kind beneficent affections towards man? One should think that the knowledge of such things is *idle speculation*, wherein *social* beings have no concern or interest. And it appears full as evident, that all bodily motions, or external observances enjoined by positive institution, that do not assist us in cultivating the duties of natural religion, are wholly idle and trifling, and upon no account to be regarded.

6. UPON

6. UPON the whole we may further observe: *The religion of nature is founded in the knowledge and belief of the existence, the perfections and providence of God, and in our being persuaded of the immortality of the soul, or of the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, wherein God our righteous judge will appoint to every man happiness or misery, according to that particular series of inward affections, which we here cultivate and employ towards God, and one another: nor can natural religion have any being or subsistence in the world, without the knowledge and belief of these principles.*

THUS we see the foundation, the nature, and sanction of that pure, spiritual, unchangeable, and eternal religion of nature, to which, it is thought, human understanding, in all the individuals of our species, is so well proportioned and adapted, *that he who runs may read it*, men of the meanest capacities can find no difficulty, but are able, with great ease, of themselves to discern it, and cannot fail to understand the whole compass of their duty. "I can't help thinking, *says the celebrated author I have in view*^f, but that (such is the "divine goodness) God's will is so clearly and "fully manifested in the book of nature, that "he who runs may read it. This can't be denied, if the book of nature shews us, in characters legible by the whole world, the relation we stand in to God and our fellow creatures, and the duties resulting from thence;

^f Christianity as old as the creation, chap. iii. p. 28.

" for

“ for then it must teach us the whole of our
 “ duty, since it would be unjust and tyrannical
 “ in any being to require more of another’s than
 “ the relation they stand in to him makes it
 “ their duty to pay, it being that relation alone
 “ which gives him his just power and autho-
 “ rity.” Indeed, “ the bulk of mankind are
 “ incapable of *metaphysical* speculations; but their
 “ understanding being given them to observe
 “ those rules of action, which God prescribes
 “ them, he has no doubt adjusted one to the
 “ other.” And “ I hope you will pardon me
 “ if I presume to think, that God, at all times,
 “ is so good and impartial, that his will, on
 “ which the happiness of all mankind de-
 “ pends, is at all times equally knowable; and
 “ consequently, must be founded upon what is
 “ always alike discernible; the nature and rea-
 “ son of things: Can a religion designed for
 “ every one, not be within the reach of every
 “ one? Or can that, which above all things it
 “ concerns ALL men to know, not be knowable
 “ to ALL^h? The meaner People are, and the
 “ lower their station, the fewer are the things
 “ their duty consists in, and those so very plain,
 “ that they cannot well mistake with relation
 “ either to God or man.ⁱ” So that, all God’s
 “ laws carry with them such evident marks of
 “ goodness and kindness for the whole race of
 “ mankind, as that men of the meanest ca-
 “ pacities, even though they cannot read in their

^g Christianity as old as the
 Creation, chap. xiii. p. 237.

^h Ibid. p. 295.

ⁱ Ibid p. 281.

“ own native language, may know their duty^k.” In these strong terms we are assured that the being, the perfections and providence of God, the immortality of the soul, a future state of rewards and punishments, and all those duties which flow from the nature and reason of things, and the relations we stand in to God and our fellow creatures, are the plainest things in the world; so extremely plain, that they are forthwith, at the first glance, discovered, and clearly perceived by men of the meanest abilities. How all this is answered *in fact*, we shall see in our enquiry.

But by the above reflections, I not only propose to point out some main particulars, to which the common powers and understanding of mankind must be proportioned, if they are able of themselves, without foreign instruction, to discern the religion of nature; but I thereby likewise intend to engage the reader to reflect, that I am none of those, who would go about to magnify revelation at the expence of natural religion. No, *the righteousness of thy laws, O God, is everlasting. Heaven and Earth will pass away, but they shall endure for ever. Whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease, whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away; but charity faileth never.* And indeed what power is able, in any instance, to disturb or abrogate that divine constitution of things, that is more firm and stable than the foundation of the earth and the pillars

^k Christianity as old as the Creation, p. 284.

of heaven? Almighty God cannot deny the perfections of his own nature, nor alter the essential properties of his intelligent and rational creatures; and while these things continue, natural religion must prove firm and eternal¹. So that vain deluded men may consider things *partially*, they may talk big, and raise a loud clamour about *mysteries*, as of high moment and importance; but if in any thing they would derogate from the religion of nature, they are as *founding brass and a tinkling cymbal*; they make an empty noise; their idle speculations can make no impression on the everlasting rules of righteousness, that must eternally bind the rational nature.

And as natural religion is permanent, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. So it is the everlasting spring, the never failing fountain of all *social* joy and happiness. It is manifest, that the safety and prosperity of social beings must lie in the harmony and agreement of their social affections. And how glorious to behold a system of moral natures, under the influence of the most beneficent being, the great object of all adoration, all conspiring together in all the sentiments and actions of unbounded love and benevolence! The delights, the enjoyments of such a society, are pure and elegant, beyond expression, ravishing! And is it not the religion of nature, that thus intimately unites rational beings to one another's interests, and that diffuses among them universal concord and friendship? No other in-

¹ See Dr. *Russ*'s Discourse of truth; and the annot.

stitution in the universe can prove the *immediate* foundation of happiness to moral agents; no other means whatsoever can derive to them the great blessings and joys of rational society. And so far as a man forms himself upon the principles of natural religion; does he not so far excel his own nature, and, as a son of God, maintain the peace of the world, every where communicate good and impart happiness to the rest of mankind? Whereas in every instance, wherein a man deviates from the sacred rules of natural religion, does he not more or less strike at the root of our common safety and happiness, and in proportion to his strayings, disturb the peace of his fellows, and introduce cruel pain and misery? 'Tis impossible in any other series of actions, than those prescrib'd by the religion of nature, that mankind can become what they ought to be, *happy to themselves, and means of happiness to one another.*

AND when we thus find, that natural religion is in itself eternal and unchangeable, and the great cause or spring of human happiness; we can want no further demonstration to convince us, that, as we value our own safety, and regard the foundation of the happiness of all rational creatures, we must not, in any article, part with the religion of nature, but hold it fast as our inestimable treasure, the most divine institution, in all things so *holy, just and good*, that we must thereby measure the worth of every other thing, that may pretend to serve us as a means to promote our happiness. So that, if an *angel* from
E
heaven

heaven should offer us an institution, that in any sort is derogating to the religion of nature, we must not hear him; nay, we cannot but look upon him as our enemy, as one who means to rob us of our most valuable property, the only sure means of our lasting happiness. And does not this clearly teach us the vanity of all *mysterious* doctrines and *positive* institutions depending on human authority, which, perhaps, in some instances do not of themselves disturb the credit of natural religion, but have no tendency to promote an observance of its sacred rules and principles? One can by no means scruple at declaring that those men, who for the sake of such mysteries and institutions, or even for the sake of any whatever doctrine of *supernatural revelation*, irreligiously break through the everlasting bonds of natural religion, and slander, and oppress and persecute, and bring the world to misery about them; I say, one can have no scruple at declaring, that these men, of what shew of piety and goodness soever, are impious against God, treacherous to themselves, and open enemies to the great interests of mankind. In short, 'tis impossible that any religious institution, however speciously set forth, can deserve at all to be regarded, that does not, above all things, teach us to *deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly*; whose main design is not to *finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to redeem mankind from iniquity, to purify human minds, and to bring in everlasting righteousness*; that we may become a people peculiarly

liarly blest'd and happy in a zealous pursuit of good works. For my part, I freely give my judgment, that no system of things of another nature and tendency can have in it any shadow of title to divinity.

THUS far, I hope, I have the pleasure to go along with every *Deist* of good sense and learning: and I am always pleased when I agree with other people. Let us proceed to some other things in clearing our way towards our main argument.

S E C T. II.

The meaning of reason and the light of nature, as here understood, explain'd and determined.

The question stated. Of necessity the rational powers of the mass of mankind must be taken as the standard.

EVERY body is sensible, that no question can be handled distinctly or to good advantage, without one's having a clear notion of the meaning of the terms wherein it is conceived, and keeping that notion always the same in one's mind, through the whole course of one's reasoning. And as a man himself, without *this*, cannot well hope to prove successful in his argument; so neither can the reader form a true judgment in the case, without conceiving the same clear understanding of the same terms, and entering into

the same apprehensions and connexions of things that are carried on in the writer's mind. And yet, (such is the frailty of human nature) let a man do his best in any argument, 'tis hardly possible to prevent one's falling, in some instances, into confusion and perplexity. In the question now before us, wherein we are to examine into the extent of human knowledge with respect to matters of religion, or how far mankind of themselves may be able to go without revelation, in discerning the religion of nature, people seem to wander in great mistakes and misapprehensions, for not having a clear view of what is understood by *reason* and the *light of nature*, which are terms very much used in this argument. And indeed the meaning of these words is, for the most part, very undetermined, obscure, and equivocal. They appear in great confusion, and I am at a loss to know what they signify in this *demand* and *answer* :

“ May not the law of nature be very clear, tho’
 “ the light of nature be so very dim, as to have
 “ undeniable defects? — Can the law of nature
 “ be clear, and the light of nature be
 “ dim, when the law of nature is nothing but
 “ what the light of nature, or reason dictates?
 “ Or, as Dr. Scot expresses it, right reason,
 “ pronouncing such actions good, and such evil,
 “ is the law of nature; and those eternal
 “ reasons, upon which it so pronounces them,
 “ are the creed of nature, both which together
 “ make natural religion ^m. ” That I may

^m Christianity as old as the creation, p. 376.

there-

therefore set a fixed rule to myself, and endeavour to satisfy the reader's mind, in affording him a clearer view of the state of our question; I shall explain what I here understand by *reason* and the *light of nature*, very commonly ill understood. For this purpose, we may observe in general:

ALL men are conscious of an inward power or capacity inherent to our nature, of receiving the *ideas* and notions of things: and as those things that are the objects of our perceptions, have in themselves, with respect to each other, according to their several natures and properties, some particular agreements or disagreements, relations and proportions; so we are capable of bringing those things together, of comparing them, *two at once*, each to the other, (in some instances, *directly* and *immediately*, and in other instances, by the *intervention* of other things, that prove a common *standard* or measure) and of perceiving their several disagreements or agreements, their particular relations and proportions, which are no other but the *natural discord or connexion*, the real truth and order of things. Now (1) This *truth and order*, these *relations and proportions of things*, which in themselves are steady and permanent, quite independent of our notions and perceptions, and that continue always the same, whether we attend to them or no; are what people frequently call *reason* or the *light of nature*. So that in this sense, when it is said, that reason or the light of nature teacheth us any, whatever point of knowledge; the meaning is, the natural order and constitution

on of things, their relations and proportions teach and instruct us. Thus, *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth knowledge; there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard*ⁿ. That is to say, the order and constitution of the heavenly bodies, their relations and proportions to one another, and to this lower world, do by themselves, independent of our thoughts or attention, teach and proclaim the being and perfections of God^o.

'Tis however to be remark'd, that what knowledge or instruction soever the bare relations and proportions of things are in themselves capable of affording us, we are able to apprehend none of it, till we shall understand the nature of those things, have compared them together, and thereby perceiv'd their just relations and proportions. A book is beautifully printed in an unknown language; it teaches and declares truths the plainest, the most certain, and un-

ⁿ Psal. xix. 1, 2, 3.

^o It cannot in reason be thought, that those *metaphorical* expressions of the *Psalmist* do signify, "That in all ages of the world, and all over the face of the earth, all nations and all individuals of human kind, ever did, and shall do, in looking up to the heavens immediately perceive the being and perfections of an infinite mind." This bears a clean contradiction to *matter of*

fact, which, as we may come to see in the course of our argument, *flares* one full in the face every where through the world. So that their true meaning and import can be no other than what I have hinted. I dare say our *free-thinkers* will readily allow of it: And I hope no *christian* will be fond of setting at odds any one passage of *scripture*, and *undoubted matter of fact*.

doubted;

doubted; and it is fairly laid before me: but what knowledge can I acquire from beholding the size of the book, the shape and colour of the letters, the particular differences of words, the several distinctions of sentences and periods, and all things finely rang'd and dispos'd? Manifest it is, that, if I understand not the real nature, that is, the true import and meaning of the words, I can never compare and connect them together in a continued series of thoughts and perceptions, so as to apprehend those plain and certain truths, which the book is said to teach and declare.

So that reason or the light of nature, when it signifies, not the *inward light*, knowledge, or perceptions of the mind, but the bare relations and proportions of things *unperceiv'd* or *not attended to*; I say, reason or the light of nature, in this sense, can teach a man nothing, when one *understands not*, or *mistakes* the particular natures or properties of things; upon the knowledge whereof, and *no otherwise*, one can have access to compare those things together, and by this means come to perceive their relations and proportions. And one should think, that this *inward light*, or perception of things in the mind, is properly speaking, *the light of nature*. And therefore,

2. REASON or the light of nature likewise signifies an *apprehension or perception of the truth and order, the relations and proportions of things*. And in this sense it may well be said, that reason or the light of nature teacheth us. Thus

reason or the light of nature discovers to us, that the *three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones*; that is to say, in other words, a series of perceptions, wherein we see the natural truth and order of things, or the connexion and agreement of one thing with another, makes it manifest, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones. After the same manner one may justly maintain, that reason or the light of nature declares, *there is a God*; that is to say, a series of perceptions, wherein we apprehend the natural truth and order of things, and their several *habitudes* and proportions, lets us plainly see the being and perfections of an *infinite mind*.

NOR need I here observe, that reason or the light of nature, as it is here understood, that is, the light and knowledge of nature, or an inward perception of the truth and order of things, can never teach us, either the above equality, or that fundamental article of natural religion, unless *that* particular series of perceptions (here called reason or the light of nature) which leads on to the conclusion, be really present to our minds, or actually before us in our view. Thus, I say, reason or the light of nature, signifies an *inward perception* of the truth and order, the relations and proportions of things.

3. IN the next place, reason or the light of nature seems often to signify *that power or faculty of the mind*, whereby we are enabled to bring things together in our thoughts, to compare them one with another, and to perceive their

their truth and order, their several relations and proportions. Now,

'Tis evident, that the exercise of this power must be less or more extensive, in proportion to the *stock* of *ideas*, wherewithal the mind is furnished. And however, in the exercise of this power or faculty, one may increase one's stock of perceptions, yet the mind cannot possibly go beyond them; since our *ideas* are only the objects or *materials* in which it is or can be employ'd. Thus if a man has no ideas of *strait* lines, of *right*, *acute*, or *obtuse* angles, he cannot exercise this power in comparing these particular things together, so as to perceive the relation or proportion that the three angles of a triangle have to two right ones. And in like manner, if a man has no ideas of the *nature* and properties of the *sun* and other heavenly bodies, and of these sensible objects in this lower world, animated or inanimate, as they are all of them, (notwithstanding their beautiful constitution, order, arrangement, and effects,) only lifeless matter, void of all self-motion and consciousness; but bearing such proofs of powerful art, contrivance, and wisdom, that they cannot be the productions of thoughtless fate, or blind chance and fortune; I say, if a man has no such ideas or perceptions of these sensible objects in heaven and earth, he can never exercise his power in comparing them together, so as from hence to discern the existence of an infinite mind, the first mover and former of all things. So that,

IN the exercise of this power or faculty, whereby we compare things together, and perceive their several proportions and relations, we can, I say, go no farther, than the ideas or notions we have of things will carry us. And when reason signifies no more but this inward power or faculty of the mind, it cannot in this sense be called the light (the perception or knowledge) of nature; nor can it properly be said to teach us any thing: it is only a bare power or capacity to acquire knowledge, or to investigate the truth and order of things, their relations and proportions, whereof the *perception* is that, which teaches and discovers things to our minds.

THESE are the different meanings of these terms, *reason*, and the *light of nature*, which I judge here needful to be observed. And as for our present argument:

THE question is not, *whether* reason, or the light of nature, that is, the *unperceiv'd* truth and order of things, their bare relations and proportions *not attended to*; or, *whether* these perceptions of the truth and order, the relations and proportions of things, which *people now* have present to their minds, do teach and discover the existence of the deity, and the other articles of natural religion? This, I think, is demonstrably plain. But the question is, "*Whether* mankind left to themselves, without all *foreign instruction*, may be judged capable, in the exercise of reason, that is, the power or faculty they have to compare things together,

“ ther, and to perceive their relations, *where-*
 “ *in*, as was just now hinted, we can go no far-
 “ ther than our ideas or notions; *Whether* in the
 “ exercise of such a power, mankind of them-
 “ selves are capable of discovering the being and
 “ perfections of God, the immortality of the
 “ soul, and the other principles and branches of
 “ natural religion?”

HAVING thus pointed out several acceptations of these common terms, *reason*, and the *light of nature*; and having fixed the precise state of our question, and determin'd the particular meaning that *reason* bears in it; it will not, perhaps, be found amiss, if I here transcribe some sentiments of the author of *Christianity as old as the creation*, relating to the same subject, that the reader may have a view of *reason* in another light, and may likewise see how far we agree together in this considerable article.

“ THOUGH you talk so much, *says B*, about
 “ reason, you have not defined what you mean
 “ by that word?” In answer to this, *A*. sets
 about his definition, and explains it in this
 manner.

“ WHEN we attribute any operation to rea-
 “ son, as distinguishing between truth and false-
 “ hood, &c. we mean by it the *rational facul-*
 “ *ties*; but when we ascribe no such operation
 “ to it, as when we give a reason for a thing,
 “ &c. we then understand by it any *medium*,
 “ by which our rational faculties judge of the

“ agreement or disagreement of the terms of
 “ any proposition ; and if an author writes in-
 “ telligibly, we may easily discern in which
 “ of these two senses he takes the word. But
 “ to go to the bottom of this matter,
 “ It will be requisite to give a more distinct
 “ account of reason in both these senses : by
 “ the *rational faculties* then, we mean the *na-*
 “ *tural ability* a man has to *apprehend, judge,*
 “ and *infer* ; the immediate objects of which
 “ faculties are, not the things themselves, but
 “ the ideas the mind conceives of them : while
 “ our ideas remain *single*, they fall under the *ap-*
 “ *prehension*, and are express’d by simple terms ;
 “ when join’d, under the *judgment*, and ex-
 “ press’d by propositions ; when so join’d as to
 “ need the intervention of some other ideas to
 “ compare them with, in order to form a judg-
 “ ment, they become by that intervention
 “ the subject of *inference* or argumentation ;
 “ and this is term’d *syllogism* or argument. It
 “ must be observ’d too, that all the ideas we
 “ have, or can have, are either by *sensation* or
 “ *reflection* ; by the first we have our ideas of
 “ what passes or exists without ; by the second
 “ of what passes or exists within the mind :
 “ and in the view or contemplation of these
 “ consists all our knowledge ; that being no-
 “ thing but the *perception of the agreement or*
 “ *disagreement of ideas* ; and any two of those
 “ when join’d together so as to be affirm’d or
 “ deny’d of each other, make what we call
 “ a *proposition* ; when considered apart, what
 “ we

“ we call the *terms* of that proposition; the
“ *agreement* or *disagreement* of which terms
“ being express'd by the rightly affirming or
“ denying them of each other, is what we
“ call *truth*; the *perception* of their agreement
“ or disagreement, is what we term *knowledge*:
“ this knowledge accrues either immediately on
“ the bare intuition of these two *ideas* or *terms*
“ so join'd, and is therefore styl'd *intuitive know-*
“ *ledge*, or self-evident truth: or by the in-
“ tervention of some other idea, or ideas, as
“ a common measure of the other two; and
“ is therefore call'd the *medium*, by which rea-
“ son judges of their agreement or disagree-
“ ment; and this is call'd *demonstrative know-*
“ *ledge*, which is never to be had without the
“ help of the other. For,

“ IF there were not some propositions, which
“ need not be prov'd, it would be in vain for
“ us to argue with one another; because they
“ then could bring no proofs, but what needed
“ to be prov'd. --- Those propositions which
“ need no proof, we call self-evident; because
“ by comparing the ideas, signify'd by the
“ terms of such propositions, we immediately
“ discern their agreement, or disagreement: this
“ is, as I said before, what we call intuitive
“ knowledge, and is the knowledge of God
“ himself, who sees all things by intuition;
“ and may, I think, be call'd divine inspiration,
“ as being immediately from God; and not
“ acquir'd by any human deduction, or draw-
“ ing of consequences; this, certainly, is that
“ divine,

“ divine, that uniform light, which shines in
 “ the minds of all men, and enables them to
 “ discern whatever they do discern; since with-
 “ out it there could be no demonstration, no
 “ knowledge, but invincible obscurity, and uni-
 “ versal uncertainty.

“ WHERE a proposition can't be made evi-
 “ dent by comparing the two ideas or terms of
 “ it with each other, it is render'd so by inter-
 “ mediate ideas or terms; whereby the agree-
 “ ment, or disagreement of the ideas under
 “ examination, or the truth of that proposition
 “ is perceiv'd; and when there is an intuitive
 “ perception of the agreement, or disagreement
 “ of the intermediate ideas in each step of the
 “ progression, then, and not till then, it be-
 “ comes demonstrative knowledge; otherwise
 “ it can rise no higher than probability, which
 “ consists not in a certain, but a likely con-
 “ nexion between the terms of a proposition,
 “ and the intermediate proofs of it: so that
 “ every proposition that is only probable, must
 “ have a proportionable degree of uncertainty,
 “ otherwise it would amount to demonstration;
 “ and consequently, probability, as well as cer-
 “ tainty, is founded on the relation it has to
 “ self-evident truths; because where no rela-
 “ tion of *any sort* can be discover'd, there is no
 “ room for certainty, or probability.

“ HENCE we see that all wrong reasoning
 “ is the effect of rashness, and consists either
 “ in taking propositions to have a certain con-
 “ nexion with self-evident truths, when they
 “ have

“ have but a probable one ; or imagining there
 “ is a probable connexion, when there is no
 “ connexion at all, or else mistaking the de-
 “ grees of probability.

“ WERE it not for those self-evident notions,
 “ which are the foundation of all our reason-
 “ ings, there could be no intellectual commu-
 “ nication between God and man ; nor, as we
 “ are fram’d, can God ascertain us of any truth,
 “ but by shewing its agreement with *those self-*
 “ *evident notions*, which are the tests by which
 “ we are to judge of every thing, *even the be-*
 “ *ing of a God and natural religion* ; which
 “ though not knowable by intuition, *are to be*
 “ *demonstrated by such proofs, which have medi-*
 “ *ately or immediately, a necessary connexion with*
 “ *our self-evident notions*. And therefore to
 “ weaken the force of demonstration, is to
 “ strike at all religion, and even the being of
 “ God.”

FROM this long quotation it appears, that the
 only question between the author and me can
 be this ; *Whether mankind in the use of their*
rational faculties, i. e. in the exercise of that
 natural ability a man has to *apprehend, judge,*
and infer, are able of themselves, without the
 help of revelation, *to go on from self-evident no-*
tions, in a continued chain of intermediate per-
 ceptions necessarily linked together, *till they come*
to discern the being of God and natural religion ;
which not being knowable by intuition, are to
be demonstrated by such proofs, which have, me-
diately or immediately, a necessary connexion
with

with our self-evident notions? And herein I join issue with him.

MEAN while, I hope, it will be agreed on by every body, that in examining into the *religious powers* of human nature, or how far mankind are able of themselves to extend their knowledge of religious matters, we must all along mean the *bulk of mankind*; and only regard the common powers of human nature, as they may possibly be employ'd or exerted by the individuals of our species in the common circumstances of human life. So that although one man, or some few men, in this, or that place or age of the world, should happen by some lucky juncture, as I shall here suppose, to be excited to the pursuit of abstracted speculations in matters of religion, and from one step to another, come at length to shew themselves able to discover the being and perfections of God, the immortality of the soul, and other articles of natural religion; yet this uncommon event can never, as I apprehend, be counted a fair standard, whereby to judge of the common powers and abilities of the bulk of mankind. It is true,

IN whatever particular instance human nature exerts itself, and thereby shews its innate strength and capacity, since all mankind share the same nature, it may be thought, that every man is capable of making as great advances. But however the inward powers of human nature may, perhaps, upon the matter, be in every individual pretty much the same; yet in
examin-

examining how far these powers may carry a man; we must not consider them in an abstracted *metaphysical* manner, but according to their situation, or as they stand placed and circumstantiated in the individuals that possess them: for to measure the extent of the powers of any agent, without attending to the particular circumstances of that agent, whereby the exercise of his powers may be either favoured or hindered, appears to me not a little unreasonable.

I AM apt to think, that, abstractedly considered, the inward powers of the *human mind*, with respect to the acquiring of knowledge, may be much equal to those of *angels*. This may well be allowed by those, who *contemplate the great dignity of our rational nature*, in conceiving that *our reason for kind, though not for degree, is of the same nature with that of God's*¹. But then, as the human mind, in its present situation, has not access to exert its powers in so extensive a manner, or to so great advantage as an *angel*; therefore it is that we never lay down any particular article of knowledge, acquired or professed by an *angel*, as the standard whereby one may judge how far the *human mind* may go in its discoveries; and for the like reason, though a *philosopher* should happen, in such a particular place or age of the world, to discover, suppose, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of the deity; we never can from hence be satisfied, that the *bulk of man-*

¹ Christianity as old as the creation, p. 24.

kind, whose circumstances are quite different, have it in their power, without any foreign instruction, to attain to the same points of knowledge.

So that, I say, in settling how far the human mind, in the exercise of its natural ability to *apprehend*, *judge*, and *infer*, may be able to go towards discovering the essential or common principles of natural religion; it would be vastly unfair, in my opinion, to determine the matter by any particular instance of knowledge acquir'd by the accuracy and acuteness of a philosopher: we ought certainly to judge of it by the progress, which the *bulk* of mankind, in the common circumstances in human life, amidst all the prepossessions, avocations, and incumbrances, wherein they are necessarily involved, can be supposed able to make. And I observe thus much, without considering whether any *philosopher* is able of himself to find out and explain the immortality of the soul, or the being and perfections of an infinite mind; this we shall come to understand afterwards: only here, those gentlemen who maintain the sufficiency of human powers in relation to matters of religion, will be pleased to reflect, that *every plowman*, *every mechanick*, notwithstanding their different disadvantageous circumstances, must, upon their principles, be full as able as any the *acuteſt philosopher*, *ſucceſsfully* to discover those essential articles of natural religion, wherein all men are naturally concerned: and that to pretend, because such a *philosopher* acquired,

quired, perhaps, such a particular point of knowledge, therefore *all mankind* are capable of acquiring it, is fully as absurd as to alledge, that, because an *angel* has made such a discovery, therefore the *human mind* is able to attain to it.

AND indeed, as one cannot possibly maintain, that the natural ability of the human mind to *apprehend, judge, and infer*, is fully proportion'd to investigate and discover the religion of nature; without maintaining that all the individuals of human kind, without distinction, are sufficiently able of themselves, to search out and discern all the essential articles of natural religion, that can concern their eternal happiness; (these being two things that mutually infer one another, or rather, as I apprehend, being only two different lights of the self-same thing;) so the learned author, who gives occasion to this enquiry, is clearly of opinion, that *men of the meanest parts, day-labourers and tradesmen, spinners and dairy-maids*, are not inferior to the greatest *philosophers* in their capacity to discover, *with success and certainty*, the being of God and natural religion. I have already hinted some things relating to this article; and because it is a point in this argument of some consequence, and which ought to be carried along with us, I shall here transcribe some other reflections to the same purpose.

It has been already observed, that *reason* signifies our *rational faculties, or the natural ability a man has to apprehend, judge, and infer*. In this sense it is alledged, that “our reason, which

“ gives us a demonstration of the divine perfec-
 “ tions, affords us the same concerning the na-
 “ ture of those duties God requires, not only
 “ with relation to himself, but to ourselves,
 “ and one another: those we shall discern if
 “ we look into ourselves, and consider our own
 “ natures, and those circumstances God has
 “ placed us in with relation to our fellow crea-
 “ tures; and see what conduces to our mutual
 “ happiness^r.--- Let me ask you, whether God
 “ has a greater kindness for the brute, than
 “ the rational creation? *B. That certainly must*
 “ *be a needless question.* *A.* If God then, in
 “ the very make and frame of these animals
 “ we term irrational, has implanted the sense
 “ of every thing necessary to answer the end of
 “ their creation; can we imagine, he has not
 “ as great a care of his creatures endow’d with
 “ reason, and made after his own image; and
 “ for ends infinitely more noble than the brute
 “ creation? When we see with what skill and
 “ contrivance birds, without being taught by
 “ any but the God of nature, build their nests;
 “ and how artfully the spiders frame their
 “ webb, the bees their little cells, and the
 “ beasts avoid all noxious herbs; and, not to mul-
 “ tiply instances, how all animals are endowed
 “ with sufficient sagacity, for preserving them-
 “ selves and species; must we not own that
 “ what we call *instinct*, is a certain and in-
 “ fallible guide for inferior animals? And can

^r *Christianity as old as the creation*, chap. ii. p. 16.

“ we

“ we doubt whether man, the lord of the
“ creation, has not from his superior reason
“ sufficient notices of whatever makes for his
“ greatest, his *eternal* happiness? If we cannot
“ charge God with acting thus partially, must
“ not we be obliged to own, that *reason* is as
“ certain a guide for *rational* creatures, as in-
“ stinct is for irrational? --- That eminent divine
“ Mr. S. Nye, though writing in defence of
“ revelation, says, it is obvious to every one,
“ that natural religion intimates to us, and
“ comprises the whole duty that we owe to
“ God or men: whatever is to be believed or
“ done by us, is declar’d and comprehended
“ in natural religion; God has instructed all
“ men every where in the knowledge of their
“ duty, by a connate light, even by the talent
“ of reason common to all. ---

“ B. IF what you, and these reverend au-
“ thors say, be true; the principles upon which
“ religion is founded, must be so obvious, that
“ all men even of the *meanest capacity*, may
“ from thence discern their duty, both to God
“ and man.

“ A. You shall confess there are such prin-
“ ciples by my asking you a question or two:
“ Is not the *foundation of all religion* the be-
“ lieving there is only one self-existent being,
“ to whom all others owe their being, and
“ their continuance in being? ---- If men, ac-
“ cording to the best of their understanding,
“ act for their common good, they then govern
“ themselves by the same rule God governs

“ them; their will is the same with his,
 “ and they concur in the same design with
 “ him. ----- As this is the rule both of God
 “ and man, so is it in common to the unlearn-
 “ ed, as well as the learned; for have not all
 “ alike faculties given them by God, to dis-
 “ tinguish between good and evil? B. *The*
 “ *common people may have sufficient abilities to*
 “ *know their duty to man; but can they as well*
 “ *know what they owe to God?* A. In what
 “ point is it, that men of the *meanest abilities*
 “ may not know their duty; whether it re-
 “ lates to God or man?” So that,

THUS far the author of *Christianity as old*
as the creation goes along with us: it is a-
 greed, that in judging whether human kind
 are able of themselves to discover the being of
 God and natural religion, we must examine
 into the common powers of human nature, as
 they are found in the *bulk of mankind*; with-
 out regarding how they exert themselves in
 learned men and philosophers, so as to give out
 the discoveries they may possibly make, as
 the standard whereby one may judge of the
 real extent of human understanding in all the
 individuals of our species.

BUT there is here a question, which I could
 wish the reader would direct me how to de-
 termine. 'Tis indeed possible for mankind to
 apprehend the being of God, when this truth
 comes to be proposed to them; ---- 'Tis possible

Christianity as old as the creation, chap. xiii. p. 276, &c.

for

x | for them, when they are informed about the being of God and are duely instructed in the nature and state of the heavenly bodies, and of things here below, to form solid arguments whereby one may convincingly infer and demonstrate the being and perfections of an infinite mind. From plain undoubted *fact* we know all this to be true. But now,

IF it shall appear from several plausible conjectures concerning human nature, which seem to have a foundation in the present constitution of things, and to be made good by *fact*, that mankind without revelation, are naturally far from being in a fair way to discern, of themselves, the being and perfections of God, and other necessary articles of natural religion:—If it shall further appear in *fact*, that mankind in no age, when left to themselves, ever had the knowledge of God:— That all those philosophers, who made it their particular study to enquire into the *first cause* and author of the universe, and the formation of particular beings, never did, at any time, make the discovery;— and that those few antient philosophers, who were led, *upon information*, to conceive the existence of an infinite mind, never were able to produce any rational grounds of their faith; I say, if it shall appear, that all these several articles are *true in fact*; my question is, *Whether may one from hence conclude, 'tis impossible for mankind, left to themselves, and without all revelation, to come to the knowledge of the being and perfections of an infinite mind?*

I KNOW it sounds extremely harsh to alledge, that rational creatures are not of themselves capable of discovering the being of God. But however ill this may sound, let me beg to be instructed, what else can one conclude from those particular *facts*, if they shall every where appear among mankind; amidst all the use they make of their rational faculties, or their natural abilities to apprehend, judge, and infer? One should think, if it is a possible event for mankind, without being taught, to discover the being and perfections of an infinite mind; one may wish to be informed, *in what age, in what particular instance, it ever happen'd?* And let the reader direct me,

WHETHER I shall call an event, which, as I here suppose, from the beginning of the world for so many *thousand* years all over the face of the earth, never happen'd, and to the end of the world, 'tis more than probable never will happen; I say, let the reader direct me, *whether I shall call such an event possible?* A strange possibility this must be! Which in no age, in no part of the world, ever took *effect*, notwithstanding mankind bend all their wits in that particular way, wherein it is most likely to have been *effected*. May not one in reason freely give his opinion, *the event is impossible* (without saying in a *strict* sense, *simply* and *absolutely*.) *in the common course of things, or as men*

Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ μελέτῃ τοῦ Ἰσοκράτους. Isocrates in Archidam. pag. 253.

left

left to themselves, and without revelation, universally used their rational faculties?

BUT however the reader may direct me to determine in this question; I hope it will be considered, that, let the possibility be what it will with respect to men of learning and philosophy, unless the bulk of our species, *peasants, mechanicks, spinsters, dairy-maids*, men of the *meanest abilities*, men who cannot even read in their own native language, unless such sort of people be found able of themselves to discern the essential articles of natural religion; it can never be judged true *in fact* (how plausibly soever *speculation* may declare the contrary) that mankind, without instruction, have their rational faculties so well proportioned to the great purposes of religion and happiness, that supernatural revelation is *superfluous* and *unnecessary*, and cannot therefore be expected from that being, who does nothing in vain, but all things according to the measures of infinite wisdom. And even *this*, if it shall be made out, I mean, that the *bulk* of mankind *are not able* of themselves to perceive the existence of the Deity, is enough,

¶ Nam si facultas invenienda veritatis huic studio (philosophiæ) subjaceret, & si esset id studium tanquam iter ad sapientiam, aliquando esset inventa. Cum vero tot temporibus, tot ingeniis in ejus inquisitione contritis, non sit comprehensa; apparet nullam esse ibi sapientiam. *Laët. Lib. III, Cap. ii.*

And since (as Mr. Locke observes, *Reasonableness of christianity*, p. 281.) *Philosophy seems to have spent its strength, and done its utmost*: Insanum quiddam esset & in se contrarium, existimare, ea quæ adhuc nunquam facta sunt, fieri posse, nisi per modos adhuc nunquam tentatos. *Verul. Novæ Organ. Lib. I. Aphor. 6.*

in my apprehension, to ruin the whole *hypothesis* of the deists, as it stands upon the alledged sufficiency of human reason with respect to matters of religion. But,

IF it shall further appear, that *philosophers* themselves, all the men of reason, of learning and enquiry, in all ages and places of the world, were *no more able*, than the meanest, the rudest *peasant*, to search out and discern the being and perfections of an infinite mind; I would fain know, what more is there wanting to give a total overthrow to the cause of *deism* and infidelity? The sufficiency of human reason to investigate and apprehend natural religion and all its essential articles seems to me to be the *only plea*, which the *deists* can pretend to insist on with any shew of sense or argument: and if it shall be found, that *this plea* they cannot possibly hold, without openly contradicting *universal matter of fact*; may I not hope to have the exquisite pleasure of being the happy means of recovering some of my fellow men to a just understanding of things, and of engaging them to pay a dutiful manly regard to supernatural revelation *?

* What *Theodore* professes is so humane and equitable, and so well agrees with my sincere purpose, and the address I would make to the reader, that I cannot but transcribe it.

[illegible]

νοις ὁ Θεὸς καλῶ, εἰ μὴ ἀπαλῖα εἶναι
 εἴη τὰ γὰρ ἡμετέριον, τὸν τῶν τῶν
 αἰνυμένων δόξα, καὶ τοῖς ἀποστο-
 λῶν ἀποδοξάζειν ἀποδοξάζειν· εἰ δὲ
 τῶν ἐκείνων, μὴ πάντων ὁμοῦ,
 τῶν τῶν ἐκείνων, καὶ τῶν τῶν, ἀλλ'
 οὐκ ἔστιν εἰς ἐκείνων τὸ κρίνειν
 κομίσαντες. Græc. Aff. Curat. Proleg. sub. finem.

And I would fain hope, that
a due attention to my Lord

IN

IN the mean time, let me earnestly beseech the *deist* who may be pleased to read over this inquiry, before he proceeds further, seriously to reflect, whether he will suffer himself honestly to declare *for* or *against* supernatural revelation, as in the event he shall find philosophers, peasants, *mankind of themselves able or not able* in the exercise of their natural powers to discover, (not to mention the natural immortality of the soul, which perhaps, the acutest Philosopher is not yet able to reach; but) the existence of that being, whom he himself confesses to be the *one, only living and true God?*

Verulam's ninth aphorism may engage some people to be a little more considerate in forming their sentiments. *Causa vero*

in scientiis ea una est, quod, dum mentis humanæ vires falso miramur & extollimus, vera ejus auxilia non quæramus. Nov. Organ. Lib. I.

S E C T. III.

It being only needful to enquire, whether mankind of themselves, are able to find out the being and perfections of God, and a future state of rewards and punishments; it is shewn, that mankind, left to themselves, are not able to discover the immortality of the soul. This is supported from Socrates's (or Plato's) inconclusive proofs, and his absurd notions in relation to this article.

THAT we may now enter directly upon our enquiry, and examine into the extent of human understanding, in relation to religious matters, or how far mankind may be able to go of themselves, without revelation or all foreign instruction, in discovering the religion of nature; the reader will be pleas'd to call to mind, I have hinted above that natural religion is founded in the *knowledge and belief of the existence, the perfections, and providence of God; and in our being persuaded of the immortality of the soul, or of a future state of rewards and punishments.*

AND since it must be owned, that natural religion so much depends upon our knowledge or belief of these two principles, that it cannot be supposed to subsist without them; I am apt to think we may bring our argument within
the

the narrowest compass, and without directly concerning ourselves about other articles; only enquire, *Whether mankind can be thought able of themselves, without all foreign instruction, to discern, and make out the being of God, and a future state of rewards and punishments?*

THE author of *Christianity as old as the creation*, in the quotation last transcrib'd, openly professes, that *the foundation of all religion is the believing there is only one self-existent being, to whom all others owe their being, and their continuance in being*. I cannot indeed recollect, that he sets the belief of another world in the same light; though he frequently enough mentions *the immortality of the soul*, and *the eternal happiness of mankind*. But the authors of *the oracles of reason*, and Mr. Chubb, seem expressly to join issue with us upon both those articles.

IN *the oracles of reason* we are told, that “ natural religion is the belief we have of an eternal intellectual being, and of the duty which we owe him, manifested to us by our reason, without revelation or positive law: the chief heads whereof seem contained in these few particulars; [*whereof I shall here transcribe these three*] 1. That there is one infinite eternal God, creator of all things. 2. That he governs the world by providence. 3. That we are to expect rewards and punishments hereafter, according to our actions in this life; which includes the soul's immortality, and is proved by our admitting providence.”

As for Mr. *Chubb*; “ the sufficiency, *says he*, of
 “ reason in matters of religion is now controvert-
 “ ed; and the question is, what it is that reason
 “ is sufficient for; or what is meant by those who
 “ maintain the sufficiency of reason; or that
 “ reason is a sufficient guide in matters of re-
 “ ligion. And the answer in short is this, *viz.*
 “ That reason, (where divine revelation is not)
 “ when carefully used and followed, is suffi-
 “ cient to guide men to God’s favour, and the
 “ happiness of another world: in opposition
 “ to that absolute necessity of a divine revela-
 “ tion, which supposes, that it is impossible,
 “ or next to impossible, for a man to obtain
 “ God’s favour, and the happiness of another
 “ world, who has only his reasoning faculty to
 “ guide him, and who has not the help of a
 “ divine revelation. Whether reason be suffi-
 “ cient to discover a compleat system of mo-
 “ rality, or whether it be sufficient to any other
 “ purpose, is not the present question. If it
 “ is sufficient to guide men to God’s favour,
 “ and the happiness of another world, then it
 “ answers the most valuable purposes; and this
 “ is all that I am concern’d to make good.”
 Thus Mr. *Chubb* gives out the *question*, in one of
 his tracts *concerning the sufficiency of reason*.

AND as I cannot but suppose, that if rea-
 son be sufficient to guide men to God’s favour,
 and the happiness of another world; it is cer-
 tainly sufficient to inform us there is a God,
 and what sort of being he is; and there is ano-
 ther world, and what sort of happiness is *there*
 to

to be enjoyed; or, which is the same thing, the soul is immortal, and capable of a rational happiness in a future state of existence, wherein all men shall come to be rewarded or punished; so I cannot but rest assured that all concerned in this argument, at least the *deists* for their part, as in truth they are bound, will readily agree to leave the whole question concerning the *necessity* of revelation, or the *sufficiency* of reason, to that judgment that shall be fairly given upon these two articles. I shall therefore begin with examining,

WHETHER mankind may be judged capable of discovering the immortality of the soul. And,

To keep the true state of the question always before us, it must all along be observed, that we here suppose mankind, or the human mind, left wholly to itself, without all foreign assistance, instruction, or improvement: that is to say, there is no other mind that interposes in an extraordinary manner, and communicates to the human mind any ideas or knowledge of things; but being entirely left to its own purchase, it has no ideas or knowledge of any sort, but what it acquires and collects in the exercise of its own powers and faculties. And I may have leave to represent mankind in this situation, since Lord *Herbert* has set them in the same light, in order to shew, that *of themselves they are able, without tradition or revelation, to discover the being, and perfections of God, and all other articles of natural Religion, that can be judged*

*judged necessary to our happiness*²; which is the very thing into which we are enquiring.

MEAN while I would have the reader to attend to a judicious reflection of a great philosopher, and to carry it along with him; (for I dare say, he will receive it as a certain truth) to serve us as an *apology* for those of our species who lived in former ages, if in any instance we shall happen to find a scanty measure of knowledge among 'em: " Every one, " *says Mr. Locke*³, may observe a great many " truths, which he receives at first from others, " and readily assents to as consonant to reason, " which he would have found it hard, and " perhaps beyond his strength to have disco- " ver'd himself. Native and original truth is not " so easily wrought out of the mine, as we, " who have it already dug and fashioned into " our hands, are apt to imagine. And often at

² Sed ut hæc de Deo & mundo clarior fiat sententia; supponamus hominem in theatrum hoc prodeuntem, qui ingenio quidem polleat, sed quem neque traditiones, neque revelationes, neque aliud extra se quippiam instruant. Ille quidem (quantum conjicere possum) de mundo hoc, ubi illum probe recognoverit, idem quod de instrumento musico concinne fabricato, ac tum primum viso, existimabit; haud ullo sc. cæco quantumvis casu prodiisse; sed neque id quod ex tot discrepantibus partibus constat, temere vel a seipso prorsus coaluisse. At

si musicum eximium ejus chordas suaviter pectentem audiverit, tum consilium artificis qui instrumentum illud fabricavit, tum peritiam musici qui instrumento illo adeo scienter usus est, protinus agnoscet; omniaque in eundem finem coordinata esse judicabit. Quid, quod, neque duos ob eam causam opifices fuisse facile statuerit; sed ex ejusdem artis principis, tum instrumentum, tum harmoniam profectam esse colliget? *Herb. de Relig. Gentil. cap. xiii.*

³ *Reasonableness of christianity*, p. 269.

“ fifty or threescore years old, are thinking men
 “ told, what they wonder how they could miss
 “ thinking of. Which yet their own contem-
 “ plations did not, and possibly never would
 “ have help’d them to.” *Primo incredibile
 videtur aliquid tale inveniri posse; postquam au-
 tem inventum sit, incredibile rursus videtur, id
 homines tam diu fugere potuisse^a.* But let us now
 go to our argument; and as we enter upon it,
 that we may follow the laudable custom of antient
 philosophers, *let us look up to heaven and implore
 the help, the direction, and influence of our God.*

Now on all hands it is agreed, that mankind
 had a beginning: and we must necessarily think
 that the first men, who appear’d upon earth,
 were not in a helpless infant condition, but
 were full grown, and capable of moving about
 for their own safety and subsistence. It matters
 not what number of men were at first created.
 It is indeed highly reasonable to think, that
 the account given by *Moses* concerning this
 article, is consistent with the truth. But whe-
 ther two, or whatever number of men, came
 at first into the world; if we consider them
 in relation to our present argument, *the first
 light*, in which they appear to us, is that of
 human creatures, whose minds are quite de-
 stitute of all sort of ideas, and have only some
 natural powers to apprehend them from the im-
 pression or influence of external objects, to com-
 pare them together, and to perceive their several

^a *New. Organ. Lib. I. aphor. 110.*

relations^b. And in these circumstances of human nature, the first ideas that can possibly come to the mind, must be deriv'd to it by its *bodily senses*.

I SHALL not here speak of *hunger* and *cold*, which are sensations appointed to secure the subsistence of the individual: I will only observe, that mankind, without all foreign instruction directing them how to relieve these sensations, and to lay up provisions for them against the vicissitudes of things, would, in my apprehension, unavoidably come into great distress and misery, and be in a far worse condition than brute animals^c. The other senses are those that afford us most materials of knowledge. And

THE human mind, in the condition where-

^b I confess I by no means go along with those philosophers, who maintain the doctrine of *innate ideas*. In the mean time to prevent some people from taking exceptions, let it here once for all be remarked, that in this argument human nature is considered not as *Christians* represent it in the *state of innocence*, but as it now is, the same, as *Deists* reckon that it was from the beginning. It appears in *fact*, through the whole of this enquiry, there are no such ideas relating to religion in human nature. And, I am apt to think, that people ought to be very cautious, how they *father* their philosophical speculations upon the *holy scriptures*. Is not our way of treating the *sacred books* most unaccountable? Sometimes we say that revelation not being given us, to teach us natural philosophy; there-

fore such a particular place must not be taken in a *strict philosophical sense*, but according to the *apprehensions of the vulgar*: at other times, as if the design of revelation was to teach us *natural philosophy*, (whereof, as I apprehend, the question about *innate ideas*, may be counted a part) we warmly contend, that such another place must be taken in a *strict philosophical sense*: and therefore whoever differs from us in our interpretation of it, is not only mistaken in his philosophy, but is erroneous, or perhaps *heretical*, in his divinity.

Thus men wantonly employ the *scripture*, as it may best serve their turn, or help forward a philosophical *hypothesis*; and thereby, in my opinion, greatly expose the credit of revelation.

^c Vid. *Diodor. Sicul. Lib. I. pag. 8. A.*

in

in I have plac'd it, receives by its *bodily senses*, a great many ideas from the heavens and the earth, wherein are comprehended vast varieties of objects of different properties, of various figures, and magnitudes, some at rest, and others in motion. But whatever be the stock of ideas, that the human mind thus situated may happen to acquire by its senses, what use, can we imagine, will it make of them? Or, to what particular purposes will it apply or improve them? It *bears*, it *feels*, it *smells* and *sees*, numberless things or beings, differing from one another: but from what it apprehends in this manner, will it ever come to suspect there is any particular being, or sort of things existing, besides those which it perceives by the senses? Indeed our minds, that are carefully taught and cultivated, may well be assur'd, there are in the world some spiritual beings not discernible by the senses; but how the human mind, in the situation I am speaking of, can come to apprehend there are such things existing in the universe, *pure spirits*, or *immaterial beings*, in their nature independent of all objects that affect our senses; and that human bodies are in themselves lumpish *machines*, animated by such spirits, which are not subject to *death*, but survive the dissolution of the body, and continue to exist in a *separate state* to eternity; I say, how the human mind can of itself, without all foreign instruction, arrive at this sort of knowledge, is to me, I confess, wholly unimaginable^d.

^d Vid. *Arnob. adv. gent.* Lib. II. p 34.

CERTAIN it is that even *now*, under all the improvements which mankind (no matter from whence) have acquired, not the most abstracted and contemplative philosopher is able to form any *direct* or *immediate* notion of the nature or substance of a *pure spirit*; how it exists independent of matter, or how it thinks or operates in a separate state. And if the acutest philosopher now adays, is able to form no such conception; how is it to be imagined, that a man who never was train'd to speculation, and therefore only goes upon the ideas he has by his senses, can ever come to suspect there are such beings really existing?

A PHILOSOPHER withdraws his mind wholly (if this can be deem'd possible) from sensible ideas: He attends to the inward operations of his own mind; and understanding, from his enquiries into the nature of body or matter, that consciousness, thought, and intelligence can never arise from matter, or any particles of matter, however refin'd, mov'd or agitated; he may from hence conclude, since there is thought and intelligence in the world, there must of necessity be some other substances, besides matter, that are the subject of these properties, which he calls *spiritual* beings, or *pure spirits*; whose nature, in his apprehension, not being made up of divisible parts, can suffer no dissolution, but must exist *entire* to eternity.

IN this manner, perhaps, philosophers in our days, may come to apprehend the nature and immortality of the soul. But can we imagine,
that

that the bulk of mankind arrive at this knowledge by the same sort of reasonings? Do they *abstract* their thoughts from all sensible objects, and apply them wholly in a close attention to the operations of their own minds? Do they look carefully, with accuracy and acuteness, into the essence and properties of matter, and sagaciously consider what in all circumstances may be the result of *matter* and *motion*? And from such abstracted and philosophical speculations, do they at length come to conclude, after they have duly weighed and compar'd things together, there are existing, besides matter, some other beings, whereof no man can conceive a *direct* or immediate notion, that suffer nothing by the death of the body, but continue to exist *in all their powers*, and have the privilege of an endless duration? I am apt to think, that such philosophical enquiries and conclusions are never undertaken, or at all attended to by the *bulk* of mankind, notwithstanding all the broad hints they now frequently have to pursue them.

It should seem plain from experience, that sensible ideas do so much possess and occupy the minds of far the greater part of man, that they cannot withdraw their thoughts from objects of sense, and engage them in nice, acute, abstracted speculations. And indeed how can one imagine, that People, whose minds have their first, their constant ideas, their strongest, and, perhaps, only impressions, from sensible objects, whose situation obliges them to spend their time, and employ their labour in earning their

daily subsistence, and who have neither leisure nor inclination to mind any thing else; I say, how is it to be imagined that people, who thus always live under the deep impressions of sense, and are perpetually conversant with sensible ideas, can ever disintangle their thoughts, and raise their minds to an abstracted series of refined philosophical disquisitions? Every man, who has made the experiment, must be conscious, that the shutting up, or guarding one's mind, against a continued succession of sensible ideas that are ever at hand to crowd in upon us, and the bending one's powers to a steady diligent search after abstracted truths, necessarily costs him no little care and labour. Nor do we find that people undertake, relish, or pursue such enquiries, till they are disposed and prepared by having their minds, for some years, (while they are pliable, and before they become as it were hardened with sensible impressions) skilfully cultivated, and lifted up, if I may speak so, into a new world above matter, by foreign instruction and improvement. " The greatest
" part of mankind, *says* Mr. *Locke*, want lei-
" sure or capacity for demonstration, nor can
" carry a train of proofs, which in *that* way they
" must always depend upon for conviction, and
" cannot be required to assent to, till they see
" the demonstration. Wherever they stick,
" the teachers are always put upon proof, and
" must clear the doubt by a thread of cohe-
" rent deductions from the first principle, how
" long or how intricate soever that be. And
" you

“ you may as soon hope to have all the day
 “ labourers and tradesmen, the spinsters, and
 “ dairy-maids, perfect *mathematicians*, as to have
 “ them perfect in ethicks this way*.”

So that, if in the present circumstances of the world, wherein people meet with such frequent hints to excite them to rational enquiries, and wherein they have access to so many and such good assistances, to render their enquiries easy and successful; I say, if in such circumstances, the *bulk* of mankind do never undergo the trouble of entering into an exact course of abstracted speculations, but take the easy way of following their sensible ideas, and really *know* no more, whatever they may *believe*, but what those ideas naturally express to them; we may well rest assured, that the first men, whom we here suppose to have come into the world, without having in their minds any ideas whatsoever, could have no knowledge or apprehension of any thing beyond the information of their senses.

THESE men found themselves capable of apprehending sensible objects, of perceiving pleasure and pain, and of moving about from one place to another; they see a great variety of other different creatures capable of exerting the same powers; will it once enter into their thoughts that the real *subject* of these perceptions, and the only author of these motions, is a *spiritual being*, absolutely *distinct from matter*, lodged

* *Reasonableness of christianity*, p. 282.

in every man's body, that cannot be extinguished, but must exist, after it parts from the body, in a separate state to eternity? Will they conceive thus much of other animals, as well as of themselves? Or, will they apprehend, that the souls of other creatures are only *material* and *mortal*, while theirs are *immaterial* and *immortal*? But upon what sort of conviction or evidence, will they take up with such apprehensions? 'Tis impossible they can be led to think in this manner from the information of their *senses*, or from any thing they can meet with in *experience*; nor can it at all be imagined, that they *reason* themselves into these most obscure and difficult conclusions, in the pursuit of abstracted speculations, for which they have no turn, not the least hint or improvement.

So hard is it for the mind of man, even in the most advantageous situation, to conceive a notion of a *pure spirit*, that some *Christians* of considerable note have maintained, that all *substances* whatsoever, not excepting God himself, are *material*^f; others confessing that the Deity is a *pure spirit*, are pleased to affirm, that only *all created intelligences* are of a *material nature*^g: and a third sort of *Christians*,

^f *Tertul. de Anima*, cap. vii. *De Resurrex.* cap. xvii. *de Carne Christi.* cap. xi. *adver. Prax.* cap. vii, p. 608.B. Some people apprehend that *Tertullian*, when rightly understood, has no such mistaken notions about the nature of the deity.

^g *Methodius ap. Phot.* p. 931. Here this learned *Bishop*, and a *Martyr* for *Christianity*, zealously maintains against *Origen*, that, "Departed souls are not *pure minds* or spirits, included in subtile bodies or vehicles; but are beings wholly *corpo-*

while

while they allow that the *inward nature* of angels and human souls is *purely spiritual*, do yet declare there is no apprehending any of those beings, without conceiving them *clothed with some body, or corporeal vehicle*; nor, in their judgment, can any created intelligence subsist otherwise^h; which Lord *Herbert* seems inclined to favour as *Plato's* opinion, and a thing likely in itselfⁱ: which likewise the *Mahometans*, who occupy a no small part of the world, are said to profess^k.

NAY, *Deists* themselves, whose rational powers, they say, are so well proportioned to the discovery of all religious truths, that they stand in no need of supernatural revelation, do some

“ *real, having the same shape*
 “ *and all the same members that*
 “ *our bodies now have; so that*
 “ *acquaintances here shall know*
 “ *each other hereafter.*” *Ter-*
tullian loudly declares for the
 same doctrine, in his book *De*
Anima, cap. ix. p. 344. and one
 is tempted to think that such
Christians do plainly profess
 the shades or ghosts of the an-
 tients,

Homer represents the ghost or
 soul of *Patroclus*, not only every
 way like his body, but dress in
 such sort of clothes:

Ἦλθε δ' ἐπὶ ψυχὴ Πατρόκληιο
 δεικνύου,
 Πάρι' αὐτοῦ, μέσθους τε, καὶ
 ἔμματα καὶ ἱκῆα,
 καὶ φωνή, καὶ τοῖα πρὸς χεῖρας
 ἵματα ἴσο.

Iliad. ↓. § 65.

Da jungere dextram,
 Da, genitor, teque amplexu ne
 subtrahere nostro.

Sic memorans largo fletu simul
 ora rigabat:

Ter conatus ibi collo dare bra-
 chia circum,

Ter frustra comprehensa manus
 effugit imago,

Par levibus ventis, volucrique
 simillima somno.

Virg. Æn. VI. § 697.

^h *Orig. cont. Cels.* Lib. II.
 p. 97. Lib. VII. p. 353. *De*
Princip. Lib. I. cap. vi. Lib. II.
 cap. ii. Vid. *Hierocl. in Carm.*
Pythag. p. 289, &c. Among the
 moderns, I shall mention that
 universal scholar Mr. *Leibnitz*.

ⁱ *Herbert de relig. gentil.*
 Lib. XV. p. 209.

^k *La Relig. des Mahom. &c.*
tiré du Latin de Mr. Reland,
 p. 11. 137. 253.

of them strongly argue against the existence of *pure spirits*; because, forsooth, they are able to form no ideas of any such beings. Thus upon this subject Mr. *Gildon* pronounces in *The oracles of reason*.

“ I HAVE often doubted, *says this oracle*, whether there were any such thing as *pure spirit*, independent of all body and matter; and
 “ I must own, I think, that there can be no such thing, as 'tis *vulgarly* apprehended. For what *idea* can we form of it? *Thought*, generally taken for the *essence* of the soul, seems only the *action* or an *accident* of it, since the mind is often without it, as *body* without motion or any modification of it; so that we may consider the *soul* without *thought*, but not thought without some subject to inhere in, (unless by abstraction) no more than roundness without some round body. And why the *intima natura* that composes the *matter*, which goes to the making up that definition of *body*, as extension, divisibility, impenetrability, should be incapable of receiving the accident of thought, I can find no reason; for being ignorant of these contiguous particles of matter, that are extended, divisible, and impenetrable, how can we pretend to decide it magisterially against this opinion; especially since memory, wit, and judgment, the noblest *qualities* of the *mind*, are agreed by the naturalists, as is evident from *physick*, to have so great a dependance on the mechanism of the brain? &c.---- But if
 “ the

“ the *soul* be not *matter*, though more fine and
“ subtle than the *body*, 'tis pretty strange the
“ chief part of us should be of such a na-
“ ture, that we can form no *idea* of it. But
“ 'tis stranger yet, that men should think it
“ so necessary to believe so, when a more ob-
“ vious and intelligible opinion would answer
“ all the ends of religion as well. They must
“ acknowledge the *soul* a substance; and we
“ have no *idea* of substance distinct from that
“ of body; if they have any, they would do
“ well to impart it to the grosser understandings
“ of the rest of the world.”

“ BUT these gentlemen, that advance this
“ opinion of *pure immaterial* substances, trust
“ to fancy, and mere conjectures, which they
“ can give no account at all of, but by *one*
“ *only accident*, viz. THOUGHT, which they
“ never can demonstrate incapable of inhering in
“ body, modified to that purpose, though not
“ in all bodies; for I think Mr. Bentley's far
“ from demonstrations, since they rise only
“ to a *probability*. But by making thought
“ the essence of the *Soul*, they distinguish it not
“ from that of beasts; for they think, and have
“ perhaps something equivalent to reason, or
“ must at least be granted equal to ideots. Nay,
“ this proves, that either *thought* and *matter* are
“ incompatible, or that the essence of the *souls*
“ of men and beasts is the same, and by con-
“ sequence both mortal, or immortal, for they
“ both think. Besides, since it is evident from
“ this uncontrovertible maxim, *nemo dat quod*
“ *non*

“ *non habet*, that the qualities of all things,
 “ and therefore of *body*, are in God himself
 “ (that is, in an infinite degree of perfection)
 “ the most pure of spirits; it is not likely that
 “ body should be derogatory to the purity of
 “ infinitely inferior spirits¹.” This, I presume,
 the *deists* will judge is sufficient evidence, that
 the *only natural* proof of the soul’s immorta-
 lity, is not so easily to be conceived.

IN a point then so extremely difficult, what
 can be expected from men, who in no degree
 are formed to speculation, or abstracted reason-
 ing? One would think that such men attend
 to nothing but sensible ideas, as they come and
 go, at random, in their minds. And those they
 certainly regard very carelessly, but as they hap-
 pen to affect the body with pleasure or pain,
 which can never open or rouse the mind to ab-
 stracted perceptions, and direct a man to appre-
 hend the soul is immaterial and immortal.

IN short it is obvious to every body, that a
 single man not in company with others, left
 wholly to his own instruction, can have no no-
 tion of a future state of existence; any appre-
 hension of this nature necessarily includes in it
 a certain prospect of death. But till experience
 shall have informed him, what is the way that this
 single man can come to know, that he is to
 quit this present life in the dissolution or death
 of his body? This, certainly, is an event the
 farthest of any thing from his thoughts. And

from hence may we not well conclude, that whatever number of men might at first have come into the world, no one of them could in the least have suspected, *there is a life to come*; till after he should have observed, that one or more of his companions had left this world; which might not have happened till *some hundred years* after their first appearance. But even in this event, upon the death of any of their companions, by what means could they come to judge or infer, *there is a future state of existence*? I have already hinted, that these men can have no notion of *pure spirits*, acting independently from human bodies: and to attribute existence to things, whereof in no respect they can form any sort of conception, is, one should think, a little too *mysterious* for men left to their own understanding.

I MUST therefore upon all these particulars laid together, give it as my opinion, that *mankind left wholly to themselves, and to follow their own notions and apprehensions of things, are altogether ignorant of the nature of pure spirits, and of their separate existence and immortality.*

IT may, perhaps, be granted, that an opinion concerning the immortality of the soul, and a future state of existence, has been universally received in all ages of the world: but when the question comes to be put, From whence was this notion derived to mankind? It could not possibly arise from the testimony of *sense*; it could not spring from *experience*; nor, since the doctrine of innate ideas, and principles,
is

is void of all foundation in nature, can it come from any *impressions* immediately *engraven* in the mind of man by the finger of God, as my Lord *Herbert* alledges^m. I am indeed apt to think, that it takes its rise from *supernatural revelation*. But since the *deists* are pleased to reject this opinion, the only other source that can be assigned, is people's own *researches*, and *reasoning*. And,

If the belief of the immortality of the soul is the result of human enquiry, one should think that the steps, whereby mankind in *former ages* arrived at it, must lye obvious to every thinking man in the *present age*, and prove as successful in conducting one to the same discovery.—Whither now shall we go, in order to light upon those steps, whereby mankind may seem to have come to discern the soul is immortal? If even at this day we go to the herd of our species, we shall

^m Quemadmodum igitur eundem intellectum, idem arbitrium, reliquasque animales facultates, illis (*gentilibus*) æque ac nostris impertitas, ex bonitate divina fuisse perhibent, tum veterum scripta actionesque passim: ita quidem & eandem conscientiam *iisdem notitiis porro communibus*, quibus in præsens utimur, instructam, ex eadem bonitate divina largitam illis fuisse, nemo in eorum libris versatus, puto, diffitebitur.—Ita, ut ex conscientia sola divinæ justitiæ bonitatisque argumenta certissima collegerint gentiles, futurumque statum inde prætarent. — non solum quatuor articuli supra memorati semper

stetere; nempe, 1. Esse deum summum: 2. Coli debere: 3. Virtutem esse præcipuam cultus divini partem: 4. Resipiscendum esse a peccatis: sed & hic ultimus, dari præmium & poenam, tum in hac vitâ, tum post hanc vitam, stetit, in æternumque stabit. — Hæc igitur providentiæ divinæ universalis castæque religionis sunt firmamenta illa, quæ nulli defuerê, vel deesse possunt sæculo vel regioni. — Verum quinque articulos supradictos, (uti qui *in corde describantur*) sine ulla hæsitacione accipiebant olim proculdubio gentiles. *Herbert. de relig. gentil. cap. xv. p. 205, &c.*

indeed

indeed find them professing this principle, but we shall be greatly disappointed, if we expect they will point out to us the train of reasoning, whereby they were led to such a conclusion. Nay some modern philosophers, who are well assured of the immortality of the soul, do resolve the whole into *supernatural revelation*, and expressly maintain, *it cannot be made out by natural reasons*.—The most ancient philosophers are certainly the men from whom one might expect to have full satisfaction: But *Cicero* tells us, “it cannot be said that those wise men, “however they professed the immortality of “the soul, gave any reasons for their opinion “on.” Let us therefore apply ourselves to *Plato*, or *Socrates*, the most distinguished philosopher that ever was in the world, and the first who pretended to explain the grounds upon which he held his opinion^o; that we may learn from him, by what connexion of things one may attain to the knowledge of this essential article of natural religion.

PLATO in his *Phædrus* speaking in the name of *Socrates*, directly asserts this truth; *the soul*, says he, *is immortal*^p: and in order to make it good, he lays before us this train of reasoning.

“THAT, says he, which is always in motion, is immortal. Indeed whatever communicates motion to another, when itself

^o *Cic. Tuscul. Lib. I. cap. xvii.*

^o *Id. ibid.*

^p *Plat. in Phædro, p. 245. v. 3. vid. Euseb. præp. Evang. Lib. XIII. cap. xvi.*

“receives

“ receives motion from a *third*; as it must
“ therefore come to an end of motion, so must
“ it likewise come to an end of life. Whereas
“ that which hath *self-motion*, since it never de-
“ ferts itself, must continue always in motion;
“ and in truth is the *first* cause, or spring of
“ motion, to all other things that are moved.
“ Now a spring or first cause can have no
“ original; for while itself arises from none,
“ all other beings are derived from it: nor
“ can that be a first cause, which takes its rise
“ from any thing else. And if it has no ori-
“ ginal, it cannot possibly have an end: For
“ should the first cause come to be extinguish-
“ ed, it would never again be brought into be-
“ ing; nor can any thing else arise from it, since
“ all things must needs come from a first
“ cause. Manifest therefore it is, that *that*
“ which hath self-motion, is the origin or first
“ cause of motion, and can never have a be-
“ ginning, nor come to an end: otherwise, an
“ universal stagnation would overspread the
“ heavens and the earth, and all things would
“ become *dead* and without motion. Foras-
“ much then as it thus appears, that *that*
“ which hath self-motion is immortal, one
“ may freely say with good assurance, that
“ this is the nature and condition of the soul.
“ For every *body* that is moved from without,
“ is inanimate; whereas that which hath mo-
“ tion in itself is animated; which is plainly
“ the nature of the soul. Upon the whole
“ therefore, since nothing else besides the soul,
has

“ has motion in itself; it necessarily follows,
 “ that the soul *has no beginning, and can come*
 “ *to no end.*”

THIS is *Plato's* or *Socrates's* demonstration for the immortality of the soul; with which *Aristotle* is so far from being satisfied that he uses his utmost effort to overthrow it⁹. And I violently suspect that such reasoning, (notwithstanding it has the approbation of *Cicero* in the warmest manner^r, and therefore comes supported by the authority of *three* most famous philosophers) leads us directly to apprehend, not the future existence of human souls, but the *necessary eternal* existence of that being whom we call God. And indeed *Plato* elsewhere gives us no other notion of the *Father* or first cause of the universe^t. So that for ought we have learned yet, we must continue ignorant of the immortality of the soul: for I suppose it will not easily be granted, that the human soul is absolutely independent, (*as Plato's* argument would make it) the first cause of all things; so necessary to the existence of other beings, that upon the extinction of but one single soul, all nature would sink and be dissolved.

BUT perhaps *Socrates* may guide us better to perceive the immortality of the soul, in the

⁹ *Aristot. de anima, Lib. I. cap. iii.* If the reader has any curiosity to understand how this argument was managed on both sides in ancient times, he may

consult *Macrob. in somn. Scip. Lib. II. cap. xiii.—16.*

^r *Cic. Tul. Lib. I. cap. xxiii.*

^t *Plat. in Timæo, p. 27 D. Vol. III.*

tenth book of *Plato's republick*, where he maintains the same article. And here I confess he spends more words upon this argument. But all he says comes to this.

“ NOTHING, *says he*†, can perish by a
 “ foreign evil, a calamity or distemper inherent
 “ in another. Before a thing can perish, it
 “ must be seized by an outward evil, or a
 “ distemper in its own bowels. Thus the hu-
 “ man body can never perish by any evil or
 “ corruption that is in food. It is true, when
 “ this food is taken into one's body, the body
 “ may then come to perish. But this hap-
 “ pens not immediately from the evil or noxi-
 “ ous quality in the food; but from the in-
 “ ward distemper, which this infectious food
 “ occasions in the body itself. Now the only
 “ inherent evil or distemper, that can befall the
 “ soul, is *vice* or *unrighteousness*: But no evil
 “ of this sort can be supposed able to destroy
 “ the being of the soul. And since it can
 “ never perish by a foreign evil, it must ne-
 “ cessarily continue its existence, and prove
 “ immortal.”

This is another argument, from whence *Socrates* would prove the immortality of the soul. And I am sorry to say it would be no compliment to the reader's philosophy, should I offer to shew him, that the sagacious, and the wise *Socrates* is here no more than a mere trifling *sophister*. I must beg leave however to

† *Plat. de Repub. Lib. X. p. 608. D. Vol. II.*

observe, that this great man, so wonderfully knowing in other points of religion, seems at the conclusion of this argument, as *Plato* represents it; to conceive, that all *souls* are a sort of *self-existent* or *independent* beings, whose number can neither be augmented nor diminished. “ They cannot, *says he*, become fewer, “ because none of them perish: and as little “ can their number be increased; because this “ would be making immortal things out of “ things that are mortal; by which means all “ things that are now mortal, would at length “ become immortal.” So that the notion conceived of souls, which *Plato* expresses in his *Phædrus*, and which we can apply only to the *one self-existent* and *independent being*, seems to have run strongly in his head: to which however no series of perceptions arising from a view of the nature and relations of things, could ever possibly lead him. As yet therefore we have lighted upon no steps, whereby one may come to discern the immortality of the soul.

BUT let us go on, and perhaps we may come to be more fortunate, if we pass to consider those arguments, which immediately before his death *Socrates* proposed to his friends, in order to assure them, for their comfort, that the soul is immortal. And if this great and good man was led by any series or connexion of things in nature, to apprehend the immor-

* *Plat. de Repub. Lib. X. p. 611. A.*

talities of the soul; we may well rest satisfied that upon this occasion, in the distinctest manner he was able, he would certainly lay it before his friends, whom he was now about to leave, and for whose happiness, he always bore a most tender concernment. Nor did his friends fail to let him know their *Difficulties* in relation to this article, and to endeavour after full satisfaction in a matter of such consequence, that they might not afterwards have reason to reproach themselves with negligence^x; being fully persuaded, that after *Socrates's* death they should not find one so capable of instructing them^y. So that, I say, if any where, it is in *Plato's Phædon* we may expect to meet with that connection of things, that will point out to us the immortality of the soul. Let us then attend to those steps wherein *Socrates* leads his friends, in order to give them a certain view of this fundamental article of natural religion. And we shall soon know, whether a persuasion of a future state of existence, (which, *Cebes* observes^z, *needs no little insinuation, and good proof to make it pass*) can arise from such principles.

“ FIRST of all, says *Socrates*^a, it is an ancient
 “ tradition, that our souls go hence into another
 “ world, and return from *that* to *this* again.
 “ So that our souls must exist separated from
 “ the body, and prove immortal; otherwise
 “ they could never return hither from that o-

^x *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 85. D.
 Vol. I.

^y *Id. ibid.* p. 70. B.

^z *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 70, 71.

^a *Id. ibid.* p. 78. A. 107. A. 72.

“ ther

“ther world.” And that our souls return to this life, after our bodies are dead, he explains in this manner: “All things, *says he*, are produced, or take their rise from their contraries. Thus watching begets sleep, and sleep begets watching. Now life and death being contraries, as death arises from life, so must life arise from death; else the course of nature would be lame and imperfect, and indeed, if death did not give rise to life, as life does to death, or if living things did not arise from dead ones, all things at the last must be swallowed up of death, and come totally to be extinguished: so that the immortality of the soul must necessarily be granted.”

IN the next place *Socrates* concludes the immortality of the soul from its *pre-existence* to its union with the body^b. And that our souls were in being, before they came into this state, he goes about to prove, in shewing, that

“ALL our knowledge here is nothing else but *remembrance*, or a recollecting of those things, which we must have known in a former state of existence.” It is true *Simmius* and *Cebes* observe, that *this only proves the being of the soul before it animates the body; and by no means infers its existence after death, as well as before this life.* But, says *Socrates*, “if you join this last proof of the pre-existence of the soul, with what you acknowledged before,

^b *Id. ibid.* p. 72. E. 77. c.

“namely, *that the living come from the dead*;
 “you shall find the demonstration complete.
 “For if it is true that our soul was in being,
 “before we were born, then of necessity when
 “it comes to life, it proceeds, so to speak,
 “from the bosom of death: and why should
 “it not be under the same necessity of having
 “existence and being after death, since it must
 “come back and return to life again? It is evi-
 “dent therefore that the soul is immortal.”

I CANNOT but here take notice, that all those ancient philosophers, who held the immortality of human souls, did likewise hold their *pre-existence*, and were of opinion that they came down from heaven into these bodies. It was from this notion they conceived about the *pre-existence* of our souls, that they went about to conclude their immortality. But let me here ask by the way, in what manner does *reason* or the *light of nature*, teach us that human souls *pre-existed* their union with the body? Philosophers left to the conduct of their own understanding in this sort of religious matters, are quite bewildered, and meanly give up themselves to the wildest delusions. One cannot but stand amazed at the extravagancy of those conceits, which they formed concerning the descent of human souls into these earthly bodies. They tell us that because they come from the *galaxy* or *milky way*, therefore *milk* is their first

* *Macrob. in somn. scrip. Lib. I. cap. ix. Non putaverunt (philosophi) aliter fieri posse, ut su-* *per sint animæ post corpora, nisi videantur fuisse ante corpora. Laër. Inst. Lib. III. cap. xviii.*

and proper nourishment^d. (Whether *milk* was their food while they were yet in the *galaxy*, I know not; but antient philosophers are pleased to inform us, that *souls* in another world are, like the *Stars*, nourished by *exhalations* from the earth^e; which possibly, coming to the *galaxy*, may there acquire the nature of milk.) And from their passing through such particular *spheres*, or regions in the heavens, in their way to animate these bodies, they account for the several different powers, faculties, passions, and affections that are now found inherent to human nature: thus the soul, as it is passing through the *sphere* of *Saturn*, acquires the power of *contemplation* and *reasoning*; as it is passing along the *sphere* of *Jupiter*, it acquires the power of *acting*; and other powers it acquires in other *regions*, till it comes to be united to the body^f. But to return to *Socrates*.

IN the next place, this eminent philosopher goes about to establish this great article of natural religion, in shewing that the soul is *uncompounded*, cannot be dissolved, and must therefore continue always to exist^g. And indeed, this seems to bid fairer than any thing yet advanced, to make good this important article,

^d *Pythagoras* is of opinion that the soul is nourished with blood; but this perhaps only happens when it is past its infant state. *D. Laert.* Lib. VIII. p. 221. C. Vid. *Porph. de Antr. Nymph.* p. 267.

^e *Cic. Tuscul.* Lib. I. cap. xix.

Sext. Emp. adv. Math. Lib. VIII. p. 322. A.

^f *Macrob. in somn. scrip.* Lib. I. cap. xii. Vid. *Porph. de Antr. Nymph.* p. 263.

^g *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 78. B. 79, 80.

But let us see what conviction his arguments to prove the soul is *uncompounded*, bring along with them.

“ FIRST of all, says *Socrates*, those things
“ which continue always uniform and the same,
“ such as *equality, beauty, goodness, &c.* are un-
“ compounded; whereas the things that are com-
“ pounded are variable and subject to changes :
“ so that if we can understand, what sort of
“ things are changeable, or not; we may like-
“ wise understand what sort of things are com-
“ pounded or not compounded. Now we know,
“ that changeable things are *visible*, or are per-
“ ceived by some of our *senses*; while the things
“ that continue always uniform and the same,
“ can only be apprehended by *thought*, and are
“ *invisible*: and therefore, since the soul is a
“ thing *invisible*, it is subject to no change, and
“ for this reason must be judged *uncompounded*.
“ Again, when the soul employs its bodily sen-
“ ses, it is led away to changeable things; and
“ because it is engaged in such things, it strays,
“ it staggers, and is giddy like a man in drink;
“ whereas when it pursues things by itself, with-
“ out calling in the body, it betakes itself to
“ what is pure, immortal, immutable, and, as
“ being of the same nature, dwells constantly
“ upon it, while it has the command of itself;
“ in which case, its errors are at an end, and
“ it proves always the same, as being united
“ to that which never changes; and this pas-
“ sion of the soul is, what we call wisdom or
“ prudence. So that the soul being *more like*
“ to

“ to that which is always uniform and the
 “ same, than to any thing else, it is uncom-
 “ pounded. Besides, nature requires that the
 “ body should obey, and the soul command;
 “ and herein the soul resembling that which
 “ is divine, it is, certainly, *uncompounded*. Upon
 “ the whole therefore, it is evident that the
 “ soul is indissoluble, or something *very near*
 “ it, and consequently immortal.”

THUS it is that *Socrates* proves the soul is *uncompounded*; and from hence concludes its *immortality*. But to affirm the soul is uncom-
 pounded, and consequently immortal, because
 it is *invisible*; I need hardly observe is mean
 and unphilosophical. I dare say the reader
 upon hearing it, is fully satisfied, that such
 reasoning now a days only becomes a school-
 boy. However, let us here transcribe some
 elegant lines of *Lucretius*, that expose the folly
 of this argument.

*Ne qua forte tamen cœptes diffidere dictis,
 Quod nequeunt oculis rerum primordia cerni;
 Accipe præterea, quæ corpora tute necesse est
 Consistere esse in rebus, nec posse videri.
 Principio, venti vis verberat incita pontum,
 Ingenteisque ruit naveis, & nubila differt:
 Interdum rapido percurrens turbine campos
 Arboribus magnis sternit, monteisque supremos
 Silvifragis vexit flabris; ita perfurit acri
 Cum fremitu, sævitque minaci murmure pontus.
 Sunt igitur venti nimirum corpora cæca,
 Quæ mare, quæ terras, quæ denique nubila cæli
 Vellunt,*

Vellunt, ac subito vexantia turbine raptant.

*Quare etiam atque etiam sunt venti corpora
cæca:*

*Quandoquidem factis ac molibus, æmula magnis
Annibus inveniuntur, aperto corpore qui sunt.*

Tam porro varios rerum sentimus odores;

*Nec tamen ad nareis venienteis cernimus un-
quam,*

*Nec calidos æstus tuimur, nec frigora quimus
Usurpare oculis, nec voces cernere suemus:*

*Quæ tamen omnia corporea constare necesse est
Natura: quoniam sensus impellere possunt.*

*Tangere enim, & tangi nisi corpus, nulla potest
res, &c.*

Lucret. Lib. I. v. 268.

IN the last place, to make good the im-
mortality of the soul, *Socrates* proceeds in this
manner:

“ A CONTRARY form or idea, *says he*^h,
“ does not only refuse admission to its contrary,
“ but likewise to *that*, which though not con-
“ trary, yet bringing upon it something of a
“ different nature, would destroy it. Thus the
“ form or idea of *heat* will not admit of the
“ form or idea of cold; nor will number *five*
“ ever be an even number, just as ten which
“ is its double will never be *odd*; no more than
“ *three fourths*, or a *third part*, or any other
“ part of a whole, will ever admit of the *form*

^h *Plat. in Phæd. p. 105. A.*

“ or *idea* of the *whole*. Now the soul being
“ that which always brings life to the body;
“ since *death* is contrary to *life*, the soul can
“ never admit of it, and must therefore prove
“ immortal.”

THESE now are the proofs or steps, whereby *Socrates*, would lead his friends to perceive the immortality of the soul. And I appeal to any thinking person, whether it is possible, that such reasoning should open a man's mind, and let him see the truth and certainty of the future existence of the soul, whereof he was heretofore altogether ignorant, and which, we suppose, he can apprehend no otherwise, than by a natural connexion or deduction of things? What way soever *Socrates* came to be convinced of this truth himself, it should seem extremely manifest, he by no means arrived at it in pursuing any series of ideas or notions, that could arise to one's mind from the nature and relations of things. He is much like a man, who without all sort of reasoning has somewhere or other picked up a truth, but can give no account of it; and therefore to prevent the shame of declaring for a truth, without sufficient reason to support him, he casts about to justify his opinion in the best manner he can, without being able to advance any thing to the purpose.

INDEED *Socrates* freely confesseth, that this article of the soul's immortality, if a man will narrowly attend to it, is liable to a great many doubts

doubts and objections¹. This, I am well persuaded, is a most certain truth, and might fully assure us, that the *discovery* of this article is no such easy matter to the *bulk* of mankind. But then a particular point may be thus liable to objections and doubts, and yet at the same time be capable of being made undeniably good by solid arguments. And however some people may imagine, that the article now before us is of this nature, and withal, so easy to be comprehended, that every *plowman*, and every *spinster*, is able without any difficulty to perceive it, and to answer any objections that can be made to it; yet *Socrates*, a philosopher of the deepest penetration in moral questions, was not able to convince men of good discernment who differed from him, and to put an end to their doubts and difficulties. And in truth, all the reasons, whereby he pretends to make out a future state of existence, are only so many *witty conceits*, prettily expressed, that can never bring conviction to a thinking man. *Simmius* frankly declares, that "the matter itself is so *inconceivable*, and *human weakness* is so great, that after all *Socrates* had said, he was still forced to suspect the truth of this article²; and could not hinder himself from yet resting persuaded, along with some other people, that the soul is no more than a sort of *barmony*, or a thing that arises from such a particular form or texture of the human body,

¹ *Plat. in Phaed. p. 84. C.*

² *Id. ibid. p. 107. B.*

" which

“ which must quite and clean vanish, when
 “ the body comes to be dissolved¹.” And we
 understand from *Tully*, that it far’d little better
 with several others in after ages; “ when I read,
 “ *says one*, *Plato’s book concerning the soul*, I
 “ assent to its immortality. But no sooner is
 “ the book laid down, and I begin to revolve
 “ the matter in my thoughts, than all my
 “ conviction is gone^m. And truly when a
 man’s fancy is only agreeably struck by a fine
 train of *sophistry*, or some curious subtil *conceits*
 elegantly set off; it is no wonder, when he
 comes to think seriously, and to enquire into
 the nature of things, that all his conviction,
 having no foundation in reason, goes off imme-
 diately. It is true *Galen* observes, that however
Plato’s arguments, in explaining and determin-
 ing the nature of the soul, are not fully con-
 vincing, yet they are *probable*; and *Plato* him-
 self elsewhere confesses, they have no stronger
 evidence. But even this, in my judgment, is
 an opinion a great deal too favourable, and can-
 not but appear so to every man that attends to
 his arguments above recited; nor from any
 thing *Plato* has said, (as we may take occasion
 to observe afterwards) can *Galen* overcome a
 mighty suspicion, that the nature of the soul is
 altogether *corporeal*, or a mere bodily *tempera-*
ment.

THUS, I should think it is manifest, that
Socrates or *Plato*, who was the first, so far as

¹ *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 86. B. ^m *Cic. Tuscul.* Lib. I. cap. ii.
 88. D.

we know, that pretended to argue in proof of the soul's immortality, did not arrive at the knowledge of this article of natural religion, by any series or connexion of things founded in nature. And herein we cannot but be yet more confirmed, when we recollect, what were *Plato's* opinions about the *inward* nature and constitution of the human soul, and its *state* after the dissolution of the body.

ONE may be apt to apprehend, that *Plato's* attempting to prove (how unsuccessfully soever) that the soul is an *uncompounded* being, is sufficient to assure us, that he conceived the *inward* nature of the soul to be purely *simple* and altogether indivisible, not capable of being extinguished, without coming to be annihilated. And had *Plato* made this good, he had certainly gone a great way towards proving its immortality, as a conscious thinking being. But, not only does *Plato* fail in this argument, but, as we shall come particularly to understand afterwards, he imagines the soul in its inward nature, however he may sometimes seem to apprehend it otherwise, to be a composition of *three* very odd sort of substances, which may be separated, and upon whose dissolution the death or extinction of the soul must necessarily happenⁿ. And indeed as *Plato* expressly professes, that the immortality of the *secondary Gods*, does not depend upon their own sta-

ⁿ *Plat. in Timæo*, p. 35. 41. Lib. XIII. cap. xvii. p. 700.
D. Vid. *Euseb. Præp. Evang.*

ture, but upon the will of the *supreme God* or mind; so we cannot but think he judged the same of human souls, whose composition has a greater mixture of the less perfect substance, and is more apt to be dissolved. And when a man thus apprehends human souls as a composition of various substances, and puts the event of their immortality, not upon their own inward nature, but upon the sovereign pleasure of God, it is not to be thought, that such a man came to profess the immortality of these souls, from any knowledge he had acquired of their inward frame and constitution; nay he seems to think, that whatever is brought forth or generated is *naturally mortal*^o; which is an opinion that was held by *Justin Martyr*, as well as by some other *christians* in the first age of the gospel^p. Besides that, *Plato* reports that the human soul consists of *three* parts, or of *three* different souls, two of which do naturally expire in the dissolution of the body, while the other continues to subsist; which, I likewise presume, is an opinion that cannot well enter into a man's mind, whose conclusions are founded on those perceptions, which things themselves afford to him. But of this pretty odd conceit I shall have occasion to take notice perhaps more conveniently afterwards. What I have said, sufficiently shews us, that *Plato's* sentiments concerning the *inward* nature of the soul were so extravagant, that he could not of himself

^o *Plat. in Timæo*, p. 41.

^p *Just. Martyr: Dial. cum Tryph.* p. 222.

have discovered its immortality, by discerning the foundation it has in the nature of things.

As for his opinion about the *state* of human souls after the dissolution of the body, it appears from some of his arguments to prove their immortality, that he held a *transmigration*, or the shifting and revolving of human souls from one body to another¹. And here I must confess, the sentiments of all the ancient philosophers in relation to this article appear to me so perplexed and inconsistent, that one does not well understand how to explain them. It is said of *Pythagoras* himself, that being in *Hades* he there saw *Hesiod's* soul making a hissing noise, bound with a brazen chain to a pillar; and *Homer's* soul hanging from a tree surrounded with serpents, for what he had said about the Gods². Which one should think is an account of things, that does not so well consist with a *transmigration*. At the same time *Ovid*, personating *Pythagoras*, gives it out, as if there was no end of this odd sort of revolution in the condition of human souls.

*Morte carent animæ, semperque priore relicta
Sede, novis domibus vivunt habitantque receptæ:
Ipse ego (nam memini) Trojani tempore belli
Panthoïdes Euphorbus eram; cui pectore quon-
dam*

¹ *Xenophon* seems to tax *Plato* for having deserted *Socrates*, and embraced the monstrous doctrine of *Pythagoras*. *Xen. in*

Epist. ad. Æschin. p. 1000. D.
² *Diog. Laert. in Pythag.* p. 219. B.

*Hæsit in adverso gravis hasta minoris Atridæ:
Cognovi clypeum lævæ gestamina nostræ
Nuper Abanteis templo Junonis in Argis¹.*

UPON which the poet having been naturally led to think, there can be no future state of existence, no after punishments to be dreaded, rallies mankind still in the person of Pythagoras, on their uneasy apprehensions about another world:

*Ô genus attonitum gelidæ formidine mortis,
Quid Styga, quid tenebras, & nomina vana
timetis,
Materiem vatum, falsique piacula mundi?
Corpora sive rogos flamma, seu tæbe vetustas
Abstulerit, mala posse pati non ulla putetis².*

AND thus by means of this Pythagorick doctrine we are fairly brought to entertain the same sentiments with Lucretius:

*Cerberus & Furie jam verò, & luctus egenus
Tartarus, horriferos eructans faucibus æstus,
Hæc neque sunt usquam, neque possunt esse pro-
fecto³.*

AND indeed if Pythagoras held the doctrine of transmigration, as it was taught by the Egyptians, from whom he had it⁴, one can-

¹ Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. XV. ² Lucret. Lib. III. § 1024.
³ 158. ⁴ Diad. Sicul. Lib. I. p. 88.
⁵ Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. XV. B.
⁶ 153.

not suspect he had any notion of a future state of existence. *Herodotus* informs us that the *Ægyptians* were of opinion, that "human souls leaving their bodies, do immediately pass into the bodies of brute creatures in the land, the sea and the air; and shifting about from one brute body to another, they continue thus revolving, till at the conclusion of three thousand years, they return again to human bodies." Which are sentiments that can never lead us to apprehend a life after this*. And I must here desire the reader to remark, that

THE *Ægyptians* were not only governed by this doctrine in the use of the enjoyments of life, but were thereby likewise directed in the choice of the objects of their worship. Some people conjecture, that the solemn and extraordinary worship which they payed to *Apis*, had its rise and support from their apprehending that the soul of *Osiris* went into the body of the ox, and continued to animate one *Apis* after another*. And *Philostratus* takes notice of a new object of religious worship, which they came to the knowledge of after an extraordinary manner: It should seem that *Apollonius*, (whom some people are pleased to compare to the great author of the christian revelation) having the sagacity, while he was in *Ægypt*, to discern that a tame lion, which was led about

* *Herodot. in Euterpe, cap. Mis. cap. iv.*

cxiii.

* *Diod. Sicul. Lib. I. p. 76. B.*

* *Vid. Herm. Gentil. Philosoph.*

for a *show*, was animated with the soul of *Amasis*, he had pity upon the poor king, and making it known who he was, he advised them to carry the *lion* to *Leontopolis*, and there to place him in the *temple*. Upon which the *priests* assembling together, they offer up sacrifices to *Amasis*, and send him away in great procession to the inner part of *Ægypt*^b. And from this story I am tempted to think, that the *Pythagoreans* not only followed the *Ægyptians* in their notion of an endless *transmigration*, which *Porphry* seems to give out as *Pythagoras's* opinion^c; but that in some instances they likewise imitated their worshipping brute creatures, when they conceived them animated with such particular souls^d; at least it is here manifest, that *Apollonius*, a disciple of *Pythagoras*, was not averse to people's giving into that practice.

AFTER this manner they represent *Pythagoras* to explain this doctrine of *transmigration*. But *Plato* sets it in another *light*.

I CONFESS this philosopher sometimes seems to deliver himself, as if he thought that human souls, upon leaving the body, go off immediately to be happy or miserable, without any prospect of returning to this life; and I could wish

^b *Philost. de vit. Apoll. Lib. V. cap. xlii.*

^c *Porph. de vit. Pythag. p. 24.*

^d The *Ægyptians* worshipped all sorts of brute creatures; because in their opinion, they partake of the deity, who pervades all things; and because their

souls when parted from the body, are *rational*, and have the *fore-sight* of future events, can *foretell* them, and do all things which a man in a separate state can do. *Id. de Abst. Lib. IV. §. 9, 10. Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. III. cap. v.*

there was ground to make it a question, whether *Plato* did really believe a *transmigration*. But we see, as I have before hinted, that some of his arguments for the immortality of the soul, proceed upon an assurance of the truth of this doctrine: And in those very discourses, wherein one may think, he represents the soul to go directly off into another world, and not to come back to this life again, he expressly teaches a *transmigration*; and so far as I am able to judge amidst a great deal of confusion, I take his opinion to be this.

“ HE seems to think, that good souls purified by *philosophy*, leaving this world, go up to the *stars*, and are there happy for a thousand years: that during this space of time, or most of it, evil souls haunting and wandering about the tombs and graves, till they happen to be disposed of, do either shift about from the bodies of women, and other human bodies of little account; or according to the quality of their tempers and crimes, they animate the bodies of such particular brute creatures, and revolve from one to another: but at the conclusion of this *first* period of a *thousand* years, all souls, both good and evil, are brought together in order to choose what sort of bodies they will next animate; and with this *Virgil*, who differs in other points, seems to agree in these verses:

*Has omnes, ubi mille rotam volvere per annos,
Lethæum ad fluvium Deus evocat agmine magno:
Scilicet*

*Scilicet immemores, supera ut convexa revifant,
Rurfus & incipiant in corpora velle reverti*.*

“ UPON this event we are told, that all
“ souls, without distinction, choose to animate
“ *human* or *brute* bodies, as their own disposi-
“ tions may direct them; so that some hu-
“ man souls come to animate brute bodies, and
“ some brute souls come to animate human
“ bodies, provided they had ever animated such
“ sort of bodies formerly. And thus, at every
“ term of a *thousand* years, a new election still
“ happening, if a soul during the space of
“ *three* of these periods, shall continue good
“ and virtuous, it goes off into a happy world,
“ not to return again to this earth; but if a
“ soul, during that space, continues always evil,
“ it cannot be recovered till at the expiration
“ of *ten thousand* years.” I am apt to think,
that *Pindar* is much of the same opinion, and
that he apprehends that a soul’s getting clear off
at the conclusion of *three thousand* years, to the
endless possessions of a happy life, depends up-
on its good behaviour, not only in several bodies
here below, but during the time of the *three*
different periods of its separation.

“Οσοι δ’ ἐτόλμησαν εἰς τρεῖς
ἐκατέρωθι μείναντες
ἀπὸ πάντων ἀδίκων ἔχον
ψυχᾶν, ἔπειλαν Διὸς

* *Virg. Æneid.* 6. v. 748.

de Repub. Lib. X. p. 614. — 621.

† *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 81. v. 1.

v. 2. in *Phæd.* p. 248, 249. v. 3.

ἔδον ὧσα Κρόνῳ τύγ-
 σιν, ἔνθα μακάρων
 νᾶσον ὠκεανίδες
 αὔραι περπύεσσιν εἰ.

AND perhaps *Plato* is of opinion, that those souls, which by their evil conduct fall down to this earth, do animate for the *first* period no other but human bodies, in which they are disposed according to their several qualities^h.

THESE I take to be *Plato's* sentiments with respect to the *state* of human souls after the dissolution of the Body. It must however be remarked, that he sometimes seems to report this article, much after the same manner wherein *Virgil* describes it in these following verses: which I here choose to transcribe, not only because they shew us *Plato's* opinion in some places, about the future condition of our soulsⁱ; but because they likewise give us to understand that *Virgil* apprehended the soul itself, to be only pure *Æther* or a fiery portion of subtilized air, which *Horace* calls *divinæ particulam auræ*^k; and that vice or bodily passions reduce the soul to a certain corporeal grossness, which *Plato* likewise expressly declares, when he tells us, that evil souls, which haunt the tombs, are sensibly seen^l.

^g *Pind. Olymp. Od. 2.*

^k *Hor. Sat. 2. § 78. Lib. II.*

^h *Plat. in Phæd. p. 248. C.*

^l *Plat. in Phæd. p. 81. C. Vid.*

ⁱ *Id. in Phæd. p. 113. D. Porph. Antr. Nymph. p. 257.*

*Quin & supremo cum lumine vita reliquit,
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus
omnes*

*Corporeæ excedunt pestes; penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.*

*Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum
Supplicia expendunt: aliæ panduntur inanes
Suspensæ ad ventos; aliis sub gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur seclus, aut exurit igni.*

*Quisque suos patimur manes: exinde per am-
plum*

*Mittimur Elysium, & pauci læta arva tene-
mus:*

*Donec longa dies, perfectæ temporis orbe,
Concretam exemit labem, purumque reliquit
Æthereum sensum, atque auræ simplicis ignem^m.*

Now from this account of *Plato's* opinion about the state of human souls, after the dissolution of the body; I dare venture to say, that the reader is fully sensible, that this great man (whom *Cicero* held to be in a manner a god among philosophersⁿ) can never be judg'd to have found out, or to have been capable of finding out, the immortality and the future existence of human souls, by his own sagacious reasoning. *Plato* himself does not pretend to have discovered the immortality of the soul; he confesses it was transmitted to him by some sacred traditions; so that giving credit to the

^m *Virg. Æneid. Lib. VI.*

ⁿ *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II.*

relation, without being able to prove the *natural* truth of the doctrine, he conceives of its future existence as his own fancy directed him, upon the absurd notions of a *transmigration*, which long before his days had taken place in the world; or in the manner just now describ'd by *Virgil*.

I SHALL now examine what were the opinions of some other philosophers, before and after *Socrates*, about the nature of the soul, and its future state of existence: from which we may be enabled to judge, whether it can be thought, that the knowledge which any of those philosophers had of its immortality, was the result of their own enquiry and reasoning.

S E C T. IV.

The opinions of all ancient philosophers, who, before, and after Socrates, held the immortality of the soul, are of such a nature, that those philosophers could not of themselves have discovered this fundamental article of natural religion. And far less are the bulk of mankind able make the discovery.

SOME people report that *Thales* was the first who held the immortality of the soul.

2 *D. Laert. in Thal. p. 6. C.*

But

But far more likely it is, that neither *Thales*, nor any other of the wise men, as they were called, had any thought or notion whatever of this article. One cannot precisely tell what was *Thales's* opinion about the nature of the soul; but, as I apprehend, he seems to conceive it as a certain *quality* inherent to all matter, or to every particular body, which in any sort is capable of acting or moving. Thus *Aristotle* informs us, that *Thales* attributed a soul to the *loadstone*, because it moves iron ^p. And after the same manner all other inanimate bodies that have any degree of *electricity*, all sorts of bodies that have either an *attractive* or a *repelling* force, must be endowed each of them with a soul; so that all particles of matter will, by this means, come to be animated. And some such notion as this *Thales* seems to have formed of things, when he expressly affirms that *all things are full of gods or souls* ^q. Upon which one should think it evident, that *Thales* was deeply ignorant of the nature of the soul, and could have no notion of its future state of existence. *Varro*, a man of the best learning among the *Romans*, was, as well as other philosophers, of the same opinion with *Thales*, and likewise thought that all things, *æther, air, water, earth*, are full of souls. And this famous man, while he maintains, that those souls, which reside in the upper world, are immortal, is pleased to declare, that these

^p *Arist. de anima*, Lib. I. ^q *Arist. ubi sup.* cap. viii. cap. ii. p. 620. D. Vol. 1. *Diog.* p. 628. *Diog. Laert. ubi sup.*
Laert. ubi supra.

souls which are here below, are all of them mortal.

BUT *Pherecydes Syrus*, thought to be contemporary with *Thales*, seems to have been the *first* who taught, and publish'd this doctrine of the soul's immortality. We can, however, give no account of his particular opinions about the nature of the soul, and its future existence, unless we shall suppose them to have been the same with those of his scholar *Pythagoras*. And indeed *Cicero* observes, that *Pythagoras* (who was not the *first*, as some imagine, that professed the immortality of the soul) explained and confirmed his master's sentiments upon this

August. de Civit. Dei, Lib. VII. cap. vi.

I cannot but here observe, that this ancient opinion about the world's being full of souls, seems to be held by some moderns: "Since matter is not self-conscious, (*says Archbishop King, in his essay on the origin of evil, chap. iv. § 2. p. 154.*) nor able to enjoy itself, nor capable of receiving any benefit from itself, it follows that it was not made for itself, but for something else, for which it was to be subservient in sensation, thought, or fruition.—there is nothing therefore in vain, nothing idle, nor any region without its animals.—Now since the structure of this visible world consists of various bodies, viz. pure

æther, air, earth, &c. it is highly probable, as we said before, that each of those has its proper inhabitants, viz. by the union of souls with parcels of matter.—Either then these vast fields of air or æther must be entirely destitute of inhabitants, which very few will believe, who behold every clod of earth flock'd with animals, or furnished after some such manner as we conjecture.—If then this be granted us, we may affirm that there is as great variety of souls, as of animals, and that it is one species that exerts its operations, by the help of æthereal matter, and another that stands in need of aerial, and a third of terrestrial."

Cic. Tus. 2. Lib. I. cap. xvi. article 1.

article^t. So that if the account, which *Pythagoras* gives us of the nature and immortality of the soul, will afford us ground to think that he gain'd his knowledge of these particulars from examining into the nature of things; we may perhaps presume the same of *Pherecydes*.

Now we know that *Pythagoras* imagin'd the soul to be a composition of *hot* and *cold æther*; which he explains to be *water* and *air*. And because in its constitution, as he alledges, it partakes of *cold æther*, or *air*, therein, he says, it not only differs from plants and brute animals, that have only mortal life^v, which lies in *hot*

^t *Id. ibid.*

^v One perhaps may find it not a little surprising, how *Pythagoras* comes to make any difference between the souls of plants and brute creatures, and those of men; since by his doctrine of transmigration, plants, brute, and human bodies must happen to be animated by the same souls. Thus *Empedocles* giving an account of his own state, before he came into that particular body: *It was formerly*, says he, *a boy, a girl, a shrub, a bird, a fish.*

Ἦδη γὰρ ποτ' ἐγὼ γυνώμην κῆρός
τε κόρα τε,
Θῆμιον ἢ τ' οἰωνός τε, καὶ ἐξ αἰλός
ἄμπερος ἰχθύς.

And in his apprehension, as *Ælian* informs us, (*De animal.* Lib. XII. cap. vii.) the most fortunate transmigration a man can meet withal, is, among ani-

mals to animate a *lion*, and among plants, a *laurel-tree*; which *Empedocles* accounts for in these elegant verses quoted by *Ælian*:

Ἐν θηρῶν δὲ λίοντι δρελεχέτω
χαμαιδίναι.
Γίνοντ' ἑ δάφνας δ' ἐν δένδρεσσιν
ἡνέμοισιν.

It is reported however that the *Indian Brachmans* judged those souls the happiest, who chanc'd to transmigrate into the body of a cow. *Nulle autem earum, quæ alia subintrant corpora, feliciores habentur his, quæ in vaccas commigrant. Quod domesticum, mite, benignum, & frugi animal, amplum & augustum præ aliis videtur præbere inhabitando spiritui domicilium. Hinc vacca & tauri nuptias celebrant etiam opulentiores humanis, & curant soventque animalia ista præ aliis omnibus, &c.*
æther

æther or *water*; but it is immortal in so far as the *cold æther* whereof it consists, is immortal*. At the same time *Pythagoras* seems to maintain, that even this *cold æther*, which, in his opinion, constitutes the immortal soul, is animated by a particle, or ray of light, which, as he conjectures, pervades and enlivens all things; and in truth *Aristotle* expressly says, that *some* *Pythagoreans* gave out human souls to be those atoms or particles (of light or fire) with which the air is impregnated; while others of them hold them to be that, which puts those particles in motion. Upon which he observes, that the opinion of the *Pythagoreans* about the nature of the soul is much the same with that of *Democritus* and *Leucippus*, who esteemed it an atom or particle of fire†.

THUS it was that *Pythagoras* explained the nature and immortality of the soul; and so far as it concerns its nature he seems to apprehend it in much the same light, wherein *Epicurus* after him happened to conceive it, upon whose principles *Lucretius* attributes the different tem-

Hornb. de Convers. Indorum, Lib. I. cap. v. p. 38. So that I say, it is not a little surprising how *Pythagoras* comes to make any difference between human souls and those of other creatures. But herein perhaps, he differ'd from the *Egyptians*, and conceited that there are certain sorts of souls peculiar to plants and brute animals, that cannot animate human bodies. This

however must be left among the other mysteries of this philosopher.

* *D. Laert. in Pythag.* p. 220. D.

† *Aristot. de anima*, Lib. I. cap. ii. p. 619. *Laëtantius* reckons the soul of the same nature, and from thence concludes its immortality. *Instit.* Lib. II. cap. ix. *sub. fin.* cap. xii. Lib. VII. cap. ix.

pers

pers and passions of animals to the heat or cold, or serenity of the air, of which the soul is compounded,

— *Nominis hæc expers vis, facta minutis
Corporibus latet, atque animæ quasi totius ipsa
Proporro est anima, & dominatur corpore toto.
Consimili ratione necesse est ventus & aer,
Et calor inter se vigeant commista per artus,
Atque aliis aliud subsit magis, emineatque :
Ut quiddam fieri videatur de omnibus unum :
Ne calor, ac ventus seorsum, seorsumque potestas
Aeris interimant sensum, diductaque solvant :
Est etiam calor ille animo quem sumit in ira,
Cum fervescit, & ex oculis micat acribus
ardor.*

*Est & frigida multa comes formidinis aura ;
Quæ ciet horrorem in membris, & concitat ar-
tus.*

*Est etiam quoque pacati status aeris ille,
Pectore tranquillo qui fit, voltuque sereno.
Sed calidi plus est illis, quibus acria corda,
Iracundaque mens facile effervescit in ira :
Quo genere imprimis vis est violenta leonum,
Pectora qui fremitu rumpunt plerumque ge-
mentes ;*

*Nec capere irarum fluctus in pectore possunt.
At ventosa magis cervorum frigida mens est,
Et gelidas citius per viscera concitat auras ;
Quæ tremulum faciunt membris existere motum.
At natura boum placido magis aëre vivit,
Nec nimis iræi fax unquam subdita percit*

Fumida,

*Fumida suffundens cæcæ caliginis umbras;
 Nec gelidi torpet telis perfixa pavoris;
 Inter utrosque sita est, cervos, sævosque leones.
 Sic hominum genus est, quamvis doctrina po-
 litos
 Constituat pariter quosdam, tamen illa relinquit
 Naturæ cujusque animæ vestigia prima.
 Nec radicitus evelli mala posse putandum est,
 Quin proclivius hic iras decurrat ad acreis,
 Ille metu citius paulo tentetur; at ille
 Tertius accipiat quædam clementius æquo.*

Lucret. Lib. III. v. 280.

IN all this, there is not any thing, that does not seem exactly to agree with the *nature* of the soul as explained by *Pythagoras*. And as for its *future state* of existence, I need not tell the reader, that this philosopher held a *transmigration*, as a continued rotation of human souls, (upon which I have already made some reflections) wherein they came to animate *plants*, and the bodies of *brutes*, as well as those of men. I shall only take notice, *Pythagoras* was so very confident of the truth of this doctrine, that he not only forbid his disciples the killing of animals, and the *eating of flesh-meat*;

² *Sextus Empiricus* derives this prohibition, not from the common doctrine of *transmigration*, but from their apprehending, that *one spirit* like an animating soul pervades the world, and thereby intimately unites man-
 kind, not only to one another,

but to brute animals, and brings all living creatures to be *near of kin* to each other. (*Sext. Emp. adv. Math. Lib. VIII. p. 331. B.*) And *Porphry* reports that the *Egyptians* abstained from killing and eating animals, for this natural reason confirmed by ex-

but

but he expressly mentions several bodies, which his soul in particular had successively animated; and is so good, as to inform other people about

perience, namely, "because
" their impure souls being vio-
" lently forced away, and there-
" fore still hankering after their
" bodies and keeping about
" them, people may happen
" to swallow down those souls
" along with the flesh, and
" come thereby to be great-
" ly disturbed and polluted."
Though, as the same author in-
forms us, this doctrine was im-
proved to quite contrary pur-
poses: for, "some people de-
" voured the principal parts of
" those animals, which they ap-
" prehended had the power of
" *divining*; that together with
" their souls, their *art* likewise
" might be transfused." *Porph.*
de Abstin. Lib. II. § 46, 47, 48.

But the common opinion why the *Pythagoreans* abstained from flesh meat needs not be justified. It is likely that the reasons here alledged by *Sext. Empiricus* and *Porphyrus* were additional considerations. I would only observe, it is pretty odd that the *Pythagoreans* never did forbid the eating of plants as well as animals, since they plainly tell us that human souls *transmigrate* into both. The *Manicheans* seem to have better humoured the nature of these principles; for those among them, who are called the *elect*, do not only abstain from flesh-meat, but they hold it criminal to till

the ground, to crop or pull up plants, or to gather fruit. Men indeed of such sentiments must, one should think, very soon starve and perish. But the *Manichean elect* wisely found out a *salvo*: They give leave to those of their sect, whom they call the *bearers*, to labour the ground, and gather the fruits. And as for the many *murthers*, which they imagine are thereby committed, they say, those *bearers* are forgiven them, because by that means they provide food for the *elect*, and have the intercession of the parts of God, or of the good principle, which the *elect* in eating the plants do separate from those of the evil principle. In this manner *St. Augustin* explains their opinion:

Cæteras animas & in pecora redire putant, & in omnia quæ radicibus fixa sunt, atque aluntur in terra. Herbas enim atque arbores sic putant vivere, ut vitam quæ illis inest, & sentire credant & dolere, cum læduntur; nec aliquid inde sine cruciatu eorum quenquam posse velere aut carpere. Propter quod agros spinis purgare nefas habent. Unde agriculturam, quæ omnium artium est innocentissima, tanquam plurium homicidiorum ream dementes accusant; suisque apuditoribus ideo hæc arbitrantur ignosci, quia præbent inde alimen-

what

what of the like nature had happened to them^a. Concerning himself he reports, *first*, that he was *Æthalides*, next *Euphorbus*, then *Hermotimus*, after him *Pyrrhus Delius* a fisher, and last of all *Pythagoras*; in all which revolutions he was so uncommonly happy, as to remember with great distinctness, whatever had passed, not only while he animated those bodies, but during the time of his separation^b. And as for this wonderful soul, after it left *Pythagoras*, his followers tell us, it came to animate *Pyrrander*, then *Callicleas*, and next to him, a beautiful Courtesan called *Alce*^c. By what means his followers came thus to understand the fate of their master's soul, I know not: but we are told that *Pythagoras* himself had his knowledge of the several revolutions he had made, and of what had happened in every particular succession, as a distinguishing mark of *Mercury's* great indulgence towards him, when he had the honour of being his son *Æthalides*^d.

Now I leave it to the reader to judge, whether such an account of things represents to us the nature, the immortality, and future state of the soul, as it makes one fundamental article of natural religion? Or, whether in reason it

ta electis suis, ut divina illa substantia in ventre eorum purgata, impetret eis veniam, quorum traditur oblatione purganda. Itaque ipsi electi nec in agris operantes, nec poma carpentes, nec saltem folia ulla vellentes, expectant, hæc afferri usibus suis ab auditoribus suis, viventes de

tot ac tantis, secundum suam vanitatem, homicidiis alienis. August. de Heres. cap. xlvi.

^a Porph. de vit. Pythag. p. 32.

^b Diog. Laert. in Pythag. p.

215.

^c Aul. Gell. Lib. IV. cap. xi.

^d D. Laert. ubi sup.

can be thought, that this famous head of the *Italick* philosophers was led to apprehend in this manner, the nature and immortality of the soul, by any series of perceptions arising to him from the nature of things?

JUST now it was remarked, that *Thales*, the head of the *Ionick* philosophers, seems to have had no notion of the soul's immortality. After *Thales* came his scholar *Anaximander*; and to him succeeded his scholar *Anaximenes*: who seem both of them as little to have apprehended this essential article of natural religion. Nor could their principles concerning the origin, the first cause; and formation of the world, ever lead them to conjecture any thing of this nature.

ANAXIMENES was succeeded by his scholar *Anaxagoras*. This was the first philosopher who introduced the doctrine of an *infinite mind*, as any way concerned in the production of the universe. But as for his notion of the nature of the human soul; he reported it to be of an *airy species* and a body*: and as from hence one can by no means conclude that he held its immortality, and a future state of existence; so the misfortune is, that from no accounts about this philosopher are we able to judge what were his particular sentiments upon this article. So far he seems to have agreed with *Pythagoras*, that he attributed the same sort of soul to brute animals: he likewise ima-

* *Nat. de placit. Philosoph. Lib. IV. cap. iii. p. 908.*

gined that plants are animated beings, and taught they are capable of sensation, of perceiving pleasure and pain^f: it is not however certain whether the human soul, in his opinion, is of a different nature from those he bestows upon plants, and brute animals^g. But if *Anaxagoras* had the same notion of his *air*, as it constitutes the human soul, which *Pythagoras* had of his *cold æther*; it is not unlikely that both these philosophers were of the same opinion in relation to the soul's immortality; which seems expressly to be affirmed by *Theodoret*^h. Only it may be observed, since ancient philosophers, as I have before hinted, who maintained the immortality of the soul, did likewise hold its *pre-existence*; when we find that *Anaxagoras*, as *Plato* plainly enough insinuatesⁱ, was of opinion, that the soul *is not older than the body*, one may reasonably suspect, that *Anaxagoras* had no notion of any sort, about the truth or reality of a future state of existence. And indeed *Plato* seems to look upon the pre-existence and immortality of the soul, as inseparable from one another, and in the place above referred to, lays them down both together, as one fundamental article of natural religion. Besides, that *Anaxagoras* making no distinction betwixt the *ψυχή* and the *ψυχὴ*, (whereof other philosophers, as I shall come to observe after-

^f *Arist. de plant. Lib. I. cap. i.*
p. 1008. y 2.

^g *Id. de anima, Lib. I. cap. ii.*
p. 609. D. v. 1.

^h *Theod. Græc. Affect. Curat.*
Ser. V. p. 546. C. Oper. Tom. IV.

ⁱ *Plat. de Legib. Lib. XII.*
p. 966. D. 967. v. 2.

wards,

wards, gave out the $\nu\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma$ to be *immortal*, and to belong *only to rational agents*; and the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ to be *mortal*, and to belong in common to men and to brute creatures; I say, *Anaxagoras* making no such distinction, but attributing the $\nu\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma$ to all sorts of animated beings whatever^k; this may increase one's suspicion, that the immortality of the soul, or a future state of existence, was no article of doctrine which he professed, or could recommend to mankind.

To *Anaxagoras* succeeded his scholar *Archelaus*, who so far deserted his master's principles, with respect to the production of the world, or the existence of an *infinite mind*, that it cannot be thought he had any sort of apprehension of this great article of natural religion.

THUS it appears that those philosophers before *Socrates* (for *Socrates* was *Archelaus*'s scholar) who had any notion of the immortality of the soul, did none of them arrive at the knowledge of this article, in the pursuit of any series of perceptions founded in nature. And indeed from whence can people apprehend, that the soul is *of an airy species and a body*; that it is a composition of *hot and cold æther*; that *that part of the soul, which consists of hot æther is mortal*, whilst the other part, that is made up of *cold æther*, is *immortal*? Or, from whence do they know that the soul revolves, or rambles about, from one brute body to another?

^k *Arist. ubi supra.*

*Omnia mutantur; nihil interit: errat, & illinē
 Huc venit, hinc illuc, & quoslibet occupat artus
 Spiritus; eque feris humana in corpora transit,
 Inque feras nostrer; nec tempore deperit ullo.
 Utque novis fragilis signatur cera figuris,
 Nec manet; ut fuerat, nec formas servat eas-
 dem;
 Sed tamen ipsa eadem est: animam sic semper
 eandem
 Esse, sed in varias doceo migrare figuras¹.*

ALL these are absurd idle conceits, void of all foundation in nature; and are far from being included in *that notion* of the immortality and future existence of the soul, *now* held and professed by *deists* and *every common christian*, which makes one great essential article of natural religion.

THE *immateriality* of the soul, or its being a *pure intellectual substance*, without all composition of parts, is that only notion in nature, from whence modern philosophers do, or can conclude its *natural immortality*. Now so far as I have yet come to the knowledge of things, I dare venture to say, that (excepting *Socrates* and his followers, who were likewise absurd enough in this article,) no philosopher of

¹*Ovid. Met. Lib. XV. v. 165.*
Timæus Locrus, a famous Py-
 thagorean philosopher, seems to
 apprehend, that the doctrine of
 transmigration is no more than

a pious fraud invented for the
 benefit of mankind. *Timæus*
Locr. de Anim. Mund. p. 104.
D. ap. Plat. v. 2.

whatever

whatever sect, had any the least suspicion, that the soul is an *immaterial being*, or a *pure intellectual nature*, having its own life and subsistence; but always apprehended it, either as something *material in itself*, or as something *resulting* from such a particular construction, or disposition of the parts and organs of the human body. I confess some philosophers, such as *Heraclitus*, maintain that the soul is *incorporeal* in the highest degree^m: and *Plutarch* particularly reports, that “*Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Dicaearchus, and Asclepiades* the physician, do affirm, that the soul itself is *incorporeal*, and by virtue of its nature, in perpetual motion; that in its own essence it is an intelligent substance; and retains in itself a power for natural and organical motions; and enjoys a life which is its perfectionⁿ.” But if it is not in the case of *Plato*, all that is understood by the soul’s being *incorporeal* even in the highest degree, and in its own essence an intelligent substance, can be no more, but either its being a subtile active body, always in motion, the subtilest, as *Aristotle* explains the matter^o, of all other bodies; or its being a certain quality, a particular *modification* of body or matter, ranged and disposed in such a certain manner^p. Thus, notwithstanding they

^m *Arist. de anima*, Lib. I. cap. ii. p. 620. E.

ⁿ *Plat. de Placit. philosoph.* Lib. IV. cap. iii. p. 908.

^o *Arist. de anima*, Lib. I. cap. vii. p. 626.

^p I have before hinted, that some christians apprehend angels and human souls as *incorporeal* beings, under no other notion but that of *subtile intelligent* bodies, which escape our sight

give out the soul as an incorporeal being, *Hera-*

and other senses. And indeed there is great confusion in the notions of ancient philosophers concerning this article. "He that will undertake to prove, says Dr. Cudworth, that there is something else in the world besides body, must first determine what body is; for otherwise, he will go about to prove, that there is something besides *he-knows-not-what*. But now if all body be made to consist of two substantial principles, whereof one is *matter devoid of all form*, (and therefore of *quantity* as well as *qualities*) from whence these philosophers themselves conclude, that it is *incorporeal*, (*ἀσώματον δὲ καὶ ἡ ὕλη, matter is incorporeal*. Plotin. p. 164.) the other, *form*, which being devoid of all *matter* must needs be *incorporeal* likewise. And thus *Stobæus* sets down the joint doctrine both of *Plato* and *Aristotle*: ὅτι τῶν τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ τῆς ὕλης ἀφαιρεθέντων ἀσώματον, ὅπως καὶ ἡ ὕλη τῆς αἰσθητοῦ χωρεῖσθαι καὶ ἀσώματον, δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀφαιρετὴ συνίστη, πρὸς τὴν σωματικὴν ἐπέσται. That in the same Manner, as form alone, separated from matter is incorporeal; so neither is matter alone, the form being separated from it, body. But there is need of the joint concurrence of both these, matter and form together, to make up the substance of body. Moreover, if to forms, qualities be

likewise superadded, of which it is consentaneously also resolved by the *Platonists*, ὅτι αἱ ποιότητες ἀσώματοι, (*Alcinous* cap. 11.) that qualities are *incorporeal*, as if they were so many spirits possessing bodies: I say in this way of philosophizing, the notions of body and spirit, corporeal and incorporeal, are so confounded, that it is impossible to prove any thing at all concerning them. Body itself being made incorporeal, (and therefore every thing incorporeal) for whatsoever is wholly compounded and made up of incorporeals, must needs be itself also incorporeal.

Furthermore, according to this doctrine of *matter*; forms and *qualities*, in body; life and understanding may be supposed to be certain forms or *qualities* of body, and then the souls of men may be nothing else but blood, and brains, endued with the *qualities* of sense and understanding, or else some other more subtle, *sensitive*, and *rational* matter in us. And the like may be said of *God* himself also; that he is nothing but a certain *rational*, or *intellectual*, *subtle*, and *fiery* body, pervading the whole universe; or else, that he is the *form* of the whole corporeal world, together with the matter making up but one substance. Which con-

clitus

clitus makes it a vapour or exhalation¹; *Pythagoras* will have it to be a composition of hot and cold æther, by which, as I have said, he understands water, and air; *Thales* seems to reckon it as a quality inherent in all matter; and from *Plutarch's* own account of their several opinions, *Aristotle*, *Dicæarchus*, and *Asclepiades*, only apprehend it as a certain quality belonging to a particular texture and disposition of the human body.

THESE we see are so many ancient philosophers, from whose notions about the inward nature of the soul, it plainly appears, that none of these great men who professed its immortality, can be supposed to have come to the knowledge of this article, or to have been able to have searched it out, by their own reasoning.

WHITHER now shall we go in carrying on our enquiry? — I confess I am put to a stand. I know not what philosopher, or sect of philosophers, I can next turn me to, who seem to believe the immortality of the soul, or to hold it on better principles. *Cicero* was master of all the learning of the ancients: he had a strong passion to believe, that the soul is immortal: *Quod si in hoc erro*, says he, *quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, lubentur erro; nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, ex-*

¹ ceits have been formerly entertained by the best of those ancients, who were captivated under that dark infirmity of mind, to think that there could be no other substance

besides body." *Cudworth. Intellect. system*, chap. i. § 40.

² *Arist. ubi sup. cap. ii. p. 620. E. Plat. de placit. philosoph. Lib. IV. cap. iii.*

torqueri volo. Let us therefore enquire into his opinion about the inward nature and constitution; from which we shall see, whether he was able to proceed in a necessary connexion of things, and trace out its immortality. And that I may save myself the trouble of composing, and do the reader a greater pleasure; I shall here transcribe a very just account of his sentiments upon this subject, out of Mr. *Locke's Letters to the bishop of Worcester*.

“ THE soul, says Mr. Locke, is agreed, on
 “ all hands, to be that in us which thinks.
 “ And he that will look into the first Book of
 “ *Cicero's Tusculan Questions*, and into the sixth
 “ Book of *Virgil's Æneids*, will find that these
 “ two great men, who of all the *Romans* best
 “ understood philosophy, thought, or at least
 “ did not deny the soul to be a subtile matter,
 “ which might come under the name of *aura*,
 “ or *ignis*, or *æther*, and this soul they both
 “ of them called *spiritus*; in the notion of
 “ which, it is plain they included only thought
 “ and active motion, without the total exclu-
 “ sion of matter[†].

“ IT is impossible that a man of so good
 “ sense as *Tully*, when he uses the word *corpus*
 “ or *body* for the gross and visible parts of a
 “ man, which he acknowledges to be mortal,
 “ should look on the soul to be a modification of
 “ that body; in a discourse wherein he was en-
 “ deavouring to persuade another, that it was

[†] *Cic. de Senect. sub. fin.*

[†] *Locke's Essay*, p. 141. § 2.

“ immortal.

“ immortal. It is to be acknowledged that
 “ truly *great men*, such as he was, are not
 “ wont so manifestly to contradict themselves.
 “ He had therefore no thought concerning the
 “ *modification of the body* of man in the case:
 “ he was not such a trifler as to examine whe-
 “ ther the modification of the body of man
 “ was immortal, when that body of itself was
 “ mortal: and therefore that which he reports
 “ as *Dicæarchus's* opinion, he dismisses in the
 “ beginning without any more ado, *chap. xi.* But
 “ *Cicero's* was a direct, plain, and sensible enqui-
 “ ry, viz. *what the soul was*, to see whether from
 “ thence he could discover its immortality? But
 “ in all that discourse in his first book of *Tusculan*
 “ *Questions*, where he lays out so much of his
 “ reading and reason, there is not one syllable
 “ shewing the least thought that the soul was
 “ an *immaterial* substance; but many things di-
 “ rectly to the contrary.

“ 1. INDEED he shuts out the body, taken
 “ in the sense he uses *corpus** all along, for
 “ the sensible organical parts of a man; and
 “ is positive *that is* not the soul: and *body* in
 “ this sense, taken for the human body, he
 “ calls the *prisoner of the soul*; and says, a wise
 “ man, instancing in *Socrates* and *Cato*, is glad
 “ of a fair opportunity to get out of it. But
 “ he no where says, any such thing of matter:
 “ he calls not matter in general the prison of

* Chap. xix, xx, xxx, xxxi, &c.

“ the soul, nor talks a word of being separated
 “ from it.

“ 2. HE concludes that the soul is not like
 “ other things here below, made up of a com-
 “ position of elements, *chap. xxvii.*

“ 3. HE concludes the two gross elements,
 “ earth and water, from being the soul, *chap.*
 “ *xxvi.*

“ So far he is clear and positive: but be-
 “ yond this he is uncertain; beyond this he
 “ could not get. For in some places he speaks
 “ doubtfully, whether the soul be not *air* or
 “ *fire*; *anima sit animus ignisve nescio*, *chap. xxv.*
 “ And therefore he agrees with *Panætius*, that
 “ if it be at all *elementary*, it is, as he calls it,
 “ *inflammata anima*, *inflamed air*; and for this
 “ he gives several reasons, *chap. xviii, xix.* and
 “ though he thinks it to be of a peculiar nature
 “ of its own, yet he is so far from thinking it
 “ *immaterial*, that he says, *chap. xix.* that the
 “ admitting of it to be an *aerial* or *igneous*
 “ nature, would not be inconsistent with any
 “ thing he had said.

“ THAT which he seems most to incline to,
 “ is that the soul was not at all elementary,
 “ but was of the same substance with the hea-
 “ vens; which *Aristotle*, to distinguish from
 “ the four elements, and the changeable bodies
 “ here below, which he supposed made up of
 “ them, called *quinta essentia*: that this was
 “ *Tully's* opinion is plain from these words;
 “ *Ergo animus, qui, ut ego dico, divinus est; ut*
 “ *Euripides audent dicere, Deus: & quidem, si*
 “ *Deus*

“ *Deus, aut anima, aut ignis est; idem est ani-*
 “ *mus hominis. Nam ut illa natura cœlestis &*
 “ *terra vacat & humore; sic utriusque harum re-*
 “ *rum humanus animus est expers. Sin autem*
 “ *est quinta quædam natura ab Aristotele induc-*
 “ *ta; primum hæc & Deorum est & animorum.*
 “ *Hanc nos sententiam secuti, his ipsis verbis in*
 “ *Consolatione hæc expressimus, cap. xxvi. And*
 “ then he goes on, *cap. xxvii*, to repeat those
 “ his own words, which your lordship has
 “ quoted out of him, wherein he had affirmed,
 “ in this treatise *De consolatione*, the soul not to
 “ have its original from the earth, or mixed, or
 “ made of any thing earthly; but had said,
 “ *singularis est igitur quædam natura, est vis*
 “ *animi sejuncta ab his usitatis notisque naturis;*
 “ whereby he tells us he meant nothing but
 “ *Aristotle’s quinta essentia*; which being un-
 “ mixed, being that of which the Gods and
 “ souls consisted, he calls it *divinum, cœleste*,
 “ and concludes it eternal, it being, as he
 “ speaks, *sejuncta ab omni mortali concretionē*,
 “ From which it is clear, that in all his en-
 “ quiry about the substance of the soul, his
 “ thoughts went not beyond the four elements
 “ or *Aristotle’s quinta essentia*, to look for it,
 “ In all which there is nothing of immateri-
 “ ality, but quite the contrary.
 “ He was willing to believe (as good and
 “ wise men have always been) that the soul
 “ was immortal; but for that it is plain he
 “ never thought of its *immateriality*, but as the
 “ *eastern* people do, who believe the soul to be
 “ immortal,

“ immortal, but have nevertheless no thought,
 “ no conception of its immateriality. It is re-
 “ markable, what a very considerable and ju-
 “ dicious author says in the case. *No opinion,*
 “ *says he^v, has been so universally received, as*
 “ *that of the immortality of the soul; but its*
 “ *immateriality is a truth, the knowledge where-*
 “ *of has not spread so far. And indeed it is*
 “ *extremely difficult to let into the mind of a*
 “ *Siamite the idea of a pure spirit. This the*
 “ *missionaries, who have been longest among them,*
 “ *are positive in. All the Pagans of the east*
 “ *do truly believe that there remains something*
 “ *of a man after his death, which subsists inde-*
 “ *pendently and separately from his body. But*
 “ *they give extension and figure to that which*
 “ *remains, and attribute to it all the same mem-*
 “ *bers, all the same substances, both solid and*
 “ *liquid, which our bodies are composed of. They*
 “ *only supposed that the souls are of a matter*
 “ *subtile enough to escape being seen or hand-*
 “ *led.—— Such were the shades and the manes*
 “ *of the Greeks and the Romans. And it is by*
 “ *these figures of the souls, answerable to those of*
 “ *the bodies, that Virgil supposed Æneas know*
 “ *Palinurus, Dido and Anchises in the other*
 “ *world.*

“ BUT to return to Cicero, it is plain that
 “ in his enquiries about the soul, his thoughts
 “ went not at all beyond matter. Thus the ex-
 “ pressions that drop from him in several places

A Loubiere du Royaume de Siam, Lib. I. cap. xix. § 4.

“ of

“ of this book evidently shew. For example,
“ that the souls of excellent men and women
“ ascended into heaven; of others that they
“ remained here on earth, *chap. xii*; that the
“ soul is hot, and warms the body; that at its
“ leaving the body, it penetrates and divides,
“ and breaks through our thick, cloudy, moist
“ air; that it stops in the region of fire, and
“ ascends no farther, the equality of warmth
“ and weight making *that* its proper place,
“ where it is nourished and sustained where-
“ with the stars are nourished and sustained;
“ that by the convenience of its neighbourhood,
“ it shall there have a clearer view, and fuller
“ knowledge of the heavenly bodies, *chap. xix*;
“ that the soul also from this height, shall
“ have a pleasant and fairer prospect of the
“ earth, the disposition of whose parts will then
“ lie before it in one view, *chap. xx*; that it
“ is hard to determine, what conformation,
“ size, and place, the soul has in the body;
“ that it is too subtile to be seen; that it is in
“ the human body, as in a house, or a vessel,
“ or a receptacle, *chap. xxii*. All which are ex-
“ pressions, that sufficiently evidence, that he
“ who used them, had not in his mind sepa-
“ rated materiality from the idea of the soul.

“ It may perhaps be replied, that a great
“ part of this which we find in *chap. xix*. is
“ said upon the principles of those, who would
“ have the soul to be *anima inflammata*, *in-*
“ *flamed air*. I grant it. But it is also to be
“ observed, that in this *xixth* and the two fol-
“ lowing

“ lowing chapters, he does not only not deny,
 “ but even admits that so material a thing as
 “ inflamed air may think.

“ THE truth of the case in short is this;
 “ Cicero was willing to believe the soul im-
 “ mortal; but when he sought in the nature
 “ of the soul itself, something to establish this
 “ his belief into a certainty of it, he found
 “ himself at a loss. He confessed he knew
 “ not what the soul was; but the not know-
 “ ing what it was, he argues, *chap. ii.* was no
 “ reason to conclude it was not. — While he
 “ greatly extolls its divine qualities, he avowed-
 “ ly professes he does not know but *breath* or
 “ *fire* might be this thinking in us: and in all
 “ his considerations about the substance of the
 “ soul itself, he stuck in *air*, or *fire*, or *Aristo-*
 “ *tle's quinta essentia*, for beyond these it is e-
 “ vident he went not.

“ But with all his proofs out of *Plato*, to
 “ whose authority he defers so much, with
 “ all the arguments his vast reading, and great
 “ parts could furnish him with for the im-
 “ mortality of the soul, he was so little satis-
 “ fied, so far from being certain, so far from
 “ any thought that he had, or could prove it,
 “ that he over and over again professes his ig-
 “ norance and doubt of it. In the beginning
 “ he enumerates the several opinions of the
 “ philosophers, which he had studied about it:
 “ and then full of uncertainty says, *harum sen-*
 “ *tentiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit;*
 “ *quæ verisimillima, magna quæstio*, *chap. xi.*

“ And

“ And towards the latter end, having gone
 “ them all over again, and one after another
 “ examined them, he professes himself still at
 “ a loss, not knowing on which to pitch, nor
 “ what to determine. *Mentis acies*, says he,
 “ *seipsam intuens nonnunquam hebescit, ob eam-*
 “ *que causam contemplandi diligentiam omittimus.*
 “ *Itaque dubitans circumspēctans, hēsitans, multa*
 “ *adversa revertens, tanquam in rate in mari*
 “ *immenso, nostra vebitur oratio*, chap. xxx. And
 “ to conclude this argument, when the person
 “ he introduces as discoursing with him, tells
 “ him he is resolved to keep firm to the im-
 “ mortality; Tully answers, *cap. lxxxii, Laudo*
 “ *id quidem, etsi nihil animis oportet credere :*
 “ *movemur enim sæpe aliquo acute concluso, la-*
 “ *bamus, mutamusque sententiam, clarioribus e-*
 “ *tiam in rebus; in his est enim aliqua ob-*
 “ *scuritas*².”

THUS it is further evident, that the ancient
 philosophers did not perceive or come to suspect
 the immortality of the soul, from their know-
 ledge of its inward nature. And I cannot but
 here observe, that what Cicero and other phi-
 losophers so pompously declaim about the *divine*
original of the soul, its coming *from heaven* and
returning thither again, is, in the nature of
 things, or as they conceive the nature of the
 soul, most consistent with the sentiments of *Epi-*
curus, and is described in this manner by *Lu-*
cretius.

² *Lock's Essay*, p. 160. Vol. II.

*Denique cœlesti sumus omnes semine oriundi.
 Omnibus ille idem pater est, unde alma liquenteis
 Humorū guttas mater cum terra recepit,
 Fœta parit nitidas fruges, arbutaque læta,
 Et genus humanum, & parit omnia sæcla ferarum,
 Pabula cum præbet, quibus omnes corpora pascunt,
 Et dulcem ducunt vitam, prolemque propagant.
 Quapropter merito Maternum nomen adeptæ sūt.
 Cedit item retro, de terra quod fuit ante,
 In terrās : & quod missum est ex ætheris oris,
 Id rursum cœli rellatum templā receptant.*

HAVING thus far explained the opinions of ancient philosophers about the inward nature of the soul; it is now to be remarked, that there is another light wherein these philosophers represent the human soul, from whence it will yet more strongly appear, that they did not apprehend its immortality from any views founded in nature.

HITHERTO the human soul has been set before us as an *individual*, or as *one single* particular being. But this does not seem to have been the opinion of the ancients: they set forth the human soul as a composition of several souls, or they give out every individual man to be animated with several distinct souls, that have different natures and qualities. Thus,

Pythagoras, after having reported some very extravagant things concerning the *sensitive* soul and its powers, is pleased to tell us, as *Diogenes Laertius* relates the matter,

† *Lucret. Lib. II. v. 990.*

“ That

“ That the soul of man consists of *three* parts;
 “ viz. *νῆς*, *φρένες*, and *θυμὸς*; that the *νῆς* and
 “ *θυμὸς* are likewise common to brute crea-
 “ tures; that the human soul takes its rise from
 “ the *heart*, and reaches to the *brain*; and that
 “ the *νῆς* and *θυμὸς* are mortal, but the *φρένες*
 “ immortal.” In this manner *Pythagoras* ex-
 plains the composition of the human soul. Whe-
 ther he really imagined, there is any part of
 the soul extended along that *intermediate space*
 between the heart and the brain; or whether
 he fancy'd that the parts of the soul, which
 are seated in these different places, lie entirely
 separated, at that distance from one another,
 and thereby make (as is most likely) *two* dif-
 ferent souls, that have communication with
 each other, I know not: but philosophers
 seem to have been careful not to confound
 those different parts, of which they conceived
 the human soul to be composed, but to keep
 them clearly distinguished from one another.
 Thus *Aristotle* thinks he has reason to find fault
 with *Democritus* for making no difference be-
 tween the *ψυχὴ* and the *νῆς*; and to blame
Anaxagoras for confounding these *two* things to-
 gether, so as to make the *νῆς* an ingredient in
 the constitution of all sorts of animals, great
 and small, honourable and base*.

THE matter is, philosophers apprehended the
νῆς to be *that* soul, or *part* of the soul, seated

* *Diog. Laert. in vit. Pythag.*
 p. 221.

* *Arist. de Anima, Lib. I. cap.*
 ii. p. 619.

in the human *brain*, whereby we discern *truth*, and are capable of *reasoning*; which are powers or faculties that do not belong to brute creatures^b: and as for the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$, they imagined it to be that sort of soul, or *part* of soul, whereby we are capable of *sensations* and *passions*; which are likewise common to brute animals. So that according to these philosophers, herein differing from *Pythagoras*, who, no doubt, understood $\nu\tilde{\epsilon}\varsigma$ in another meaning, as the $\nu\tilde{\epsilon}\varsigma$ is a thing peculiar to rational beings, though in *Aristotle's* opinion, some men are without it^c; and the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ is found both in man and in brute animals; so it is highly absurd to go about to jumble these *two* things together. And is not this a strong temptation for one to suspect, that the $\nu\tilde{\epsilon}\varsigma$ and the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ are different souls? One cannot help thinking they necessarily must be so, in the apprehensions of those philosophers, who make *one of them immortal*, belonging only to human kind, and other rational beings; and *the other mortal*, as well in man as in brute animals^d: the fable which *Plutarch* relates, serves to illustrate this pretty strongly: "It should seem
 " that one *Thespeius* having fallen from a
 " precipice, by which his body lay motionless
 " for three days; his rational soul, upon this

^b *Porphyry* warmly contends that the souls of brute animals are of the *same* inward nature, and have the same powers and faculties with those of human kind: wherein he follows the doctrine of the *Phœnicians* and

Egyptians. *Porphyr. de Abst.* Lib. III. § 1, &c. *Euseb. præp. Evang.* Lib. VII. cap. xvii.

^c *Arist.* ubi supra.

^d *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.* Lib. IV. cap. iv, v, vii.

accident,

“ accident, was parted from his body, and
 “ went away to another world; where he ob-
 “ served many things wonderful, very particular-
 “ ly that the souls of the deceased come off from
 “ their bodies, included in little fiery bubbles,
 “ which happening to break as they mount
 “ upwards through the yielding air, the souls
 “ come forth in human shapes, well adjusted
 “ in their weight and magnitude. Now while
 “ *Thespeius* had thus gone to the other world
 “ with his rational soul, his *νῆς* or *φρένες*; he
 “ is said to have left *τὴν ἄλλην ψυχὴν*, his other
 “ soul, or the rest of his soul, like an anchor,
 “ in his body; though it was able to exert no
 “ symptoms of life till his *τὸ φρονεῖν*, his ra-
 “ tional soul, had returned^e.”

THUS it was, that philosophers conceived a-
 bout the human soul: and this opinion, that
 makes the soul a corporeal extended substance,
 composed of different sorts of matter, that have
 different properties, and seem to constitute dif-
 ferent souls; I say this opinion, as I apprehend,
 is little better than *that* of other philosophers,
 which reports the soul as a certain *temperament*
 of body that is different in different animals, or
 in different parts of the same body, and which
 in every difference happens to make a different
 soul. Thus we have a *nutritive*, a *sensitive*, an *ap-*
petitive, a *loco-motive*, a *dianoetical* soul^f; or as
 many different sorts of souls, as there are dif-
 ferent animals (among which *plants* are includ-

^e *Id. de his qui sero a Num.* ^f *Arist. de Anima, Lib. II.*
pun. p. 563. D. 564. C. cap. iii.

ed) of different constitutions; or as there are different *tempers* and affections in the different parts of the same animal body. I confess I am of opinion, that *Aristotle* had no other notion of the soul. And I am apt to think that *Hippocrates* (or whoever was the author of that book) plainly means these *temperaments* of body, when he declares himself in this manner: "As that
 " man, *says he*, is thought to have great power,
 " who is able to sustain many others, but
 " when these fail, is suspected to become weak-
 " er; so those bodies, that are capable of sus-
 " taining a great many souls, are counted strong
 " and vigorous, but to grow weak, as their souls
 " (their *temperaments*, fail them^s." Indeed this opinion takes away at once all foundation for the immortality of the soul, which in this way, must necessarily decay and expire along with the several tempers and modifications of the body: but I dare venture to say, that in the nature of things, the former opinion serves as little to lead people to apprehend the being or truth of this great article of natural religion.

THESE are opinions extravagantly absurd. Whether *Plato's* is a great deal better, and lies more level to human understanding, as being more consistent and rational, the reader will determine. It stands thus:

" THIS prince of philosophers is pleased to
 " join to the rational soul, which he held to
 " be immaterial and immortal, two other sorts

^s *Hippocrat. de Diet. Lib. I. § 18.*

“ of soul, which he gives out as *mortal*, and
 “ that seem to be *material*.” A *strange composition*! But it should seem *Plato* was not able to apprehend how a rational immortal soul should be subject to those different and contrary passions and appetites, to which all mankind are liable, and which every man has inherent in his nature. And therefore, as in the IVth book of his *republick* he goes about to prove from several considerations, that all men have within them *three* different sorts of soul^b; so in his *Timæus*, where he explains the formation of the universe, he expressly tells us, “ that the inferior Gods, to whom the supreme God had
 “ committed the formation of the several beings in this lower world, having formed a
 “ mortal body for the immortal soul, which is
 “ immediately afforded by God himself; they
 “ framed another sort of soul, mortal, and
 “ having in it strong and necessary passions:
 “ mean while, that they might, as little as possible, profane that divine immortal soul,
 “ which they seated in the *brain*; they dispose of this mortal soul at due distance, and
 “ appoint its residence in the *heart*. Then we
 “ are told of another sort of soul, which, *he*
 “ says, inferior Gods straitly fettered in its station about the *liver*ⁱ.

In this manner *Plato* endeavours to secure the honour of the divine immortal soul, that it

^b *Plat. de Repub. Lib. IV.*
 p. 436. § 2.

ⁱ *Id. in Timæo*, p. 69, 70,
 71.

may not be judged prostituted to those sensual passions of human nature, which serve to sustain the individual, and to propagate the species. But how can one imagine, that a man of his notions, a man who professes a soul, a *thing capable of sense, perception, and thought*, is material and mortal; how can one imagine that this man was ever led by any natural arguments, to apprehend a soul immaterial and immortal? It appears to me strongly manifest, that the apprehensions of ancient philosophers about the soul, were in the utmost confusion and perplexity; and that they had no ideas of the soul, from which they could judge or infer its *immaterial* nature, which is the only *natural* proof we know of, that can serve to convince us of its *immortality*. Perhaps one may guess at the possibility of searching out the nature of the soul, from *Galen's* success in the enquiry.

THIS distinguished physician and philosopher, a man of great accuracy and penetration, who despised the unmanly way of conceiving his opinions from authority, was particularly inquisitive about the nature of the soul; but so unfortunate was he in all his researches, as continually to come off with a baffle, and in spite of his utmost application still found himself unable to discern any thing certain in the matter.

HE observes that *Plato* maintains there are *three* sorts of soul in man, or the human soul consists of three different parts, whereof one is *concupiscible*, lodged in the *liver*; the other *irascible*, placed in the *heart*; and the third *rational*,

tional, seated in the *brain*. As for the two first sorts or parts, it is agreed they are mortal, and vanish when the man dies: "But *Plato* " having conceived an assurance, that the *ra-* " *tional* part is *immortal*; I have nothing, says " *Galen*, to offer for or against what he pro- " poses on this subject." Mean while, *Galen* freely owns, that if the soul be an incorporeal substance, and no quality or sort of body, he was not able, for all that ever he could do, to discern wherein one soul can differ from another; nor could he perceive how a thing totally different from the nature of the human body, should be extended all over the whole^k. So that *Galen*, it should seem, despairing of success in the way of speculation, and abstracted reasoning, betakes himself to experiments, and goes about to examine into the nature of the soul from effects and *Phænomena*.

For this purpose taking notice, that the proper powers or affections of the soul, arise or come from its *essence*, and can only be understood or determined by its actings^l; he observes in fact; that different men are endowed with different powers and affections, which are clean contrary one to another; and from hence he infers, that the soul in each of those men, is of a different *essence*: since, in his opinion, were each of their souls of the same *essence*, they would produce the same actions, be governed by the same affections, and be affected

^k *Galen. Quod animi mores, &c.*
cap. iii. § 5.

^l *Id. ibid.*

by the same causes. So that people's souls differ as much from one another in their essence, as they do in their actions and passions^m. Besides that *Galen* from a great many instances, makes it evident, that the powers, operations, and passions of the soul, follow the temperament, or constitution of the body. And, says he,

“ IF the rational part of the soul, is only
 “ a certain *temperament* of the brain, it will
 “ doubtless perish; but if it is immortal, as
 “ *Plato* will have it, he had done well, con-
 “ tinues *Galen*, had he, among other things he
 “ has writ concerning the soul, likewise explain-
 “ ed the cause, why it leaves the body upon any
 “ great indispositions of the *brain*; when the
 “ brain happens to be either too *cold* or too *hot*,
 “ too *moist* or too *dry*. And was *Plato* living
 “ I would be glad to learn from him, why a
 “ plentiful evacuation of blood, the taking of
 “ poison, or an ardent fever, dismisses the soul
 “ from the body? But since *Plato* is no more,
 “ and none of his followers have yet pointed
 “ out the cause of these *Phænomena*; I may
 “ venture to alledge for a reason, since it agrees
 “ with *Plato*'s principles, that *it is not every*
 “ *sort of body, that is fit to entertain a rational*
 “ *soul*. But this is nothing to the purpose: I
 “ cannot possibly shew, how this comes about,
 “ since I am quite ignorant of the nature of
 “ the soul. For my own particular, I have

^m *Galen. Quos animi mores, cap. ii.*

“ long searched narrowly after the cause of
 “ these effects, but have not been able to form
 “ any the least plausible conjecture about it.
 “ This I plainly see, that the loss of blood, the
 “ drinking of poison, chills the body, and an
 “ ardent fever overheats it: but, to repeat it
 “ again, why the body, upon its happening to
 “ be too cold, or too hot, is deserted by the
 “ soul, I have long tir'd myself in vain to find
 “ out.”

“ INDEED if the soul be of a corporeal nature, one may easily see, that it must follow the temperament or complexion of the body. And even supposing it immortal, and to have its own proper nature; *Plato*, who holds this opinion, must confess it is subject to the body, and is governed by bodily tempers and dispositions. This is evident from the follies of boys, and the dotings of old men, and from numberless other instances. One may justly affirm, when madness, the loss of memory, a privation of sense and motion, follow certain temperaments or affections of one's body, that the soul is then hindered from exerting its proper powers, which are congenial to its nature: but when a man sees, what is not to be seen; and hears what no body said; and utters things obscene, or impious, or quite repugnant to reason; this is a proof, not only that the innate powers of the soul are gone, but that

“ *Galen. Quod animi mores, cap. iii.*

“ contrary

“ contrary ones are introduced. And upon this
 “ I must own, I violently suspect that the
 “ *essence* of the soul is altogether corporeal ; for
 “ how is it possible, that, from its union with
 “ the body, it should pass into a nature quite
 “ the contrary, if it were not some quality,
 “ form, affection or power of the body ° ?”

THUS *Galen*, notwithstanding he often bent all his wits, and was long intent upon searching out the nature of the soul, and frequently called in the assistance of other philosophers, was quite unable to discover any thing certain; and in spite of all his long and careful inquiries, was at last necessitated to take up with a violent suspicion, that the nature of the soul is wholly corporeal, and consequently mortal.

IT was, as I have hinted, from observing the soul, in its powers and operations, to depend upon the *dispositions* of the body, that *Galen* conceived this strong suspicion. And that the soul is thus dependent, he not only shews from his own observations, but from *Plato*, *Aristotle* and *Hippocrates*. “ And since *Hippocrates*, says
 “ *he*, has made it evident, that the powers of
 “ the soul, not only its *irascible* and *concupiscible*,
 “ but its *rational* powers, do follow and close-
 “ ly attend the *temperament* of the body, he is
 “ certainly a most competent and creditable wit-
 “ ness; was one to support the truth of one’s
 “ sentiments, as some people do, by authority :
 “ but for my part, I herein go along with *Hip-*

° *Galen. Quod animi mores*, Bibl. Patr. Tom. II.
 cap. v. p. 450. E. vid. *Nemes. de* ? *Galen. ubi supra*, cap. i.
Nat. Hom. cap. ii. p. 481. in

“*pocrates*, not regarding him as a witness,
 “ which is the case with many others, but be-
 “ cause I apprehend his reasons are good and
 “ conclusive.” And the reader will here ob-
 serve, that as *Hippocrates* makes the bodies of
 all animals to be a composition of *fire* and *water*,
 so he reports human souls, and those of all other
 beings, to consist of the same ingredients; of
 which *fire* is the thinking, the moving, and
 governing principle; and *water* serves in afford-
 ing nourishment. Nor, in his opinion, does the
 soul receive equal increase, or prove equally vi-
 gorous in all men. “ For in young people, *says*
 “ *he*, the motions being quick, and the body
 “ increasing, these ingredients in the soul are
 “ expanded and extenuated, and go mostly to
 “ the growth of the body; and in old people,
 “ the motions being slow, and the blood cold,
 “ they naturally decline along with the man:
 “ but those people whose bodies are full grown,
 “ and in a flourishing condition, they are able
 “ to nourish and improve a great quantity of
 “ these ingredients; so that this sort of people
 “ have their souls in the greatest plenty, and
 “ most vigorous.”

^a Galen. Quod animi mores, c. ix.

^r Hippocrat. de Diet. Lib. I.
 § 4, 8, 11, 18. Much the same
 sort of principles seems to be
 given out in the oracles of rea-
 son, where for all this pompous
 title, no way proportioned to
 the silly book, one must not
 expect to meet with things con-
 sistent and uniform.

*Spiritus in nobis non manet
 in identitate, sed recens ingeri-
 tur per renovationem continuam,
 sicut flamma, velociore transitu,
 quia res est spiritualior. Nos
 quotidie facti sumus ex iis quæ
 transeunt in nos: morimur &
 renascimur quotidie, neque iidem
 hodie & heri sumus, & perso-
 nam quam transeuntem non sen-*

HAVING

HAVING thus observed that *Galen*, a great philosopher, who with great intention of mind carefully enquired into the nature and immortality of the soul, was not able upon any natural or rational principles to perceive the truth

simus, tandem pertransisse agnoscimus. Nulla est transitio rerum in nos, nisi per viam alimenti: omne alimentum respectu alimentandi est consimile & debilius: alimentantis corpus succrescit nobis in corpus; spiritus in spiritum. Non tamen proportio utriusque sit nobis ad proportionem cibi & potus, aut aeris, nisi a nobis bene separantur; aliter etenim non alunt ingesta, sed opprimunt si fortiora sunt, corrumpunt si dissimilia, idque plus minusve pro gradu in utroque. Ideoque quo melius res procedat, multa fieri oportet. — Credibile est homines, prout in iis pollet spiritus corpusve, alios melius in se convertere alimentantium spiritum, alios corpus.

After all they judge that the soul is something far more divine than elementary qualities. It is said to be a portion of God, or a momentary apparition of that eternal being, who is all things.

In illis qualitatibus non est rerum energia: longe divinius, magisque intrinsecum quiddam est in rebus, quo rei cardo vertitur, quodque solum experientia & effectu agnoscitur. Est Deus in rebus; estque omnia, & omnia agit; illius namque infiniti corpus est omne & spiritus. Ex eorum

unione oritur creatura: quæ etiam disperditur dissolutione istius unionis. Cum autem omnia perpetuo sunt in motu de una conjunctura in aliam, mundi autem corpus & spiritus æterna, sed novas continuo conjuncturas ineunt, ideoque nos creaturæ sumus æterni Dei apparitiones momentaneæ, quas tantum terris ostendunt fata, nec ultra esse finunt, veluti effigies in auleis.

Upon which account of things, Mr. Blount makes these reflexions, from which one may guess what opinion this famous deist had about the sufficiency of human reason and philosophy.

“ These, My Lord, are only
“ such twilight conjectures as
“ our human reason (whereof
“ we so vainly boast) can furnish us with. This *res deorum*,
“ or *divinum aliquid*, as *Hippocrates* terms it, is that
“ which does all things; but
“ our capacity not being able
“ to discern it, makes us fasten
“ either upon elementary qualities, as *Hippocrates* and *Galen* do, or upon geometrical proportions, as our modern
“ *Descartes* doth: so that indeed, all philosophy, excepting scepticism, is little more than dotage.” *Oxact. of Reason*, p. 152.

of this essential article of natural religion, notwithstanding he long used his utmost efforts to discern it; we may freely determine, that human nature is not well calculated to make the discovery. *In fact* it is apparent, that all ancient philosophers had such apprehensions of the nature and constitution of the human soul, that they could never have found out its immortality. *Porphyry* observes that the reasons, whereby philosophers go about to prove the immortality of the soul, are all easy to be overthrown^f.

UPON what I have hitherto proposed, I would now intercede with some reverend gentlemen, (who have been pleased publicly to condemn me in the whole of this question) for my having leave to say upon this first article, "that none of
" those ancient philosophers, who believed the
" immortality of the soul, gained the discovery of this truth, in pursuing any particular
" series or connexion of things founded in nature, that could at all convince their reason
" and judgment^g." And from hence, I should think one may satisfactorily account how it came

^f *Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. XIV. cap. x. p. 741. C.*

^g Qua de re (animæ immortalitate) ingens inter philosophos disceptatio est: nec quicquam tamen explicare, aut probare poterunt ii qui verum de anima sentiebant; *expertes enim hujus divinæ eruditionis*, nec argumenta vera quibus vincerent attulerunt, nec testimonia qui-

bus probarent. *Last. Institut. Lib. III. cap. xiii.*

Alii autem differunt superesse animas post mortem: & hi sunt maxime Pythagorici ac Stoici; quibus etiam ignoscendum est, quia verum sentiant; non possum tamen non reprehendere eos, qui non scientia, sed casu inciderunt in veritatem. *Id. ibid. cap. xviii.*

to pass, that the best philosophers so frequently expressed themselves upon this great article of natural religion, with so much doubtfulness and hesitation.

EVERY body must be sensible, that however people may incline to believe a truth, that is reported, and is really founded in nature; yet if that truth is either not sufficiently attested, or the foundation it has in nature is not open to the mind and perceived; it is impossible, but that when they seriously attend to it, and find themselves in the dark, without any inward light or evidence, they must naturally doubt and hesitate, and be conscious they perceive nothing certain in the matter.

WHEREAS when we apprehend the several natures and properties of things, and in comparing them together, perceive their relations and proportions, we must then distinguish and know what we see; and cannot but rest assured, without any misgiving or hesitation, of its truth and certainty. Thus I say, the best philosophers among the ancients came frequently to doubt or mistrust the soul's immortality; because the conjectures they had about it were not founded in nature, or did not arise from a perception of the natures and relations of things.

I HAVE already hinted, that all ancient philosophers, if we except *Socrates* and his followers (who likewise held very odd opinions about its inward nature and constitution) conceived the soul, either under the notion of a
material

material being, or as something resulting from certain dispositions of matter. And however some philosophers did, nevertheless, maintain its immortality; yet every body sees, that to imagine of the nature of the soul in this manner, must directly lead one to apprehend, that it is naturally mortal.

*At quod scinditur, & parteis discedit in ullas,
Scilicet æternam sibi naturam abnuvit esse*.*

AND certain it is, that numberless philosophers judged this article of the soul's immortality quite inconceivable; they absolutely denied it; and concluded, the soul in its own nature is mortal, and perishes along with the body. So that, as *Pliny* gives it out, mankind at their death return to the state they were in before their birth, have no existence, no place in the universe^x: which *Lucretius* expresses in this manner:

*Respice item quàm nil ad nos antea cuncta Vetustas
Temporis æterni fuerit, quàm nascimur antè.
Hoc igitur speculum nobis natura futuri
Temporis exponit post mortem denique nostram†.*

IT is curious enough to observe, how much *Glauco* is surprized at *Socrates* in asking him, whether he knew the soul is immortal? and at his pretending he was able to make it out; “Don’t you know, says *Socrates*, that the soul
“is immortal? The soul immortal! no really,

* *Lucret. Lib. III. † 640.*

x *Plin. Lib. VII. cap. iv.*

† *Lucret. Lib. III. † 985.*

“ replies

“ replies *Glauco*: but have you ought to say
 “ for it?” From whence one may easily judge,
 that men of learning and inquiry, did not then
 believe the immortality of the soul. *Aristotle*
 in his account of the opinions of ancient phi-
 losophers about the nature of the soul, pro-
 fesses the notion of its being a *harmony* to be
 of all others the most probable^a. And as for
 his own opinion he gives it in this manner:
*the soul, says he, is the last finishing, or the high-
 est perfection of a natural body capable of life.*
 Upon which he observes, that *the soul neither
 in whole, nor, if it is divisible, in any of its
 parts, can be separated from the body.* So that
 he commends those, who are of opinion, that
*the soul is neither without the body, nor is it a
 certain body: for it is not, says he, a body; but
 it is something of the body*^b. It should seem
 however, that the philosopher’s opinion upon
 this article is so perplexed and obscure, or so
 doubtful and uncertain, that it has been a great
 question, and is wholly debated among learned
 men, whether *Aristotle* did really believe the
 immortality of the soul? But whatever *Aristo-
 tle* maintained in relation to this point:

“ There are crowds of philosophers, says
 “ *Cicero*, who declare against it; not only those
 “ of the sect of *Epicurus*, whom I by no means

^a *Plat de Repub. Lib. X. p. 608.* ἐντελέχεια λέγουσι, εἶδέν ἥττον σωμα-
^b *Arist. de Anima, Lib. I. c. iv.* φέρεται τοῖς ποιεῖσθαι λέγουσιν αὐ-
^c *Id. ibid. Lib. II. cap. i.* τὴν. *Nemes. de Nat. Hom. cap.*
 p. 633. C. 631. C. cap. ii. p. II. p. 482. E. ap. Bib. Patr.
 633. *Aristoteles δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν* Tom. 2.

“despise; but I know not how, there is no
 “man of distinguished learning but thinks con-
 “temptibly of it. My particular favourite *Di-*
 “*cæarchus*; continues *Cicero*, argues with great
 “vehemence against the immortality of the
 “soul, and has writ three books to prove, that it
 “is mortal. Of the same opinion is the fa-
 “mous *Panætius*,” and he likewise supports
 it by several arguments, which, one should think,
 are fully as conclusive, if not more so than any
 thing *Socrates* or *Plato* has advanced to prove
 the contrary^c. Nay the whole body of the
Stoicks, a most considerable sect of philoso-
 phers, do unanimously conspire in denying the
 soul’s immortality. They do not indeed all af-
 firm, that the soul is immediately extinguished
 upon the dissolution of the body; for while
 some are of this opinion, others of them main-
 tain, it survives the death of the body; and
 of those who confess its future existence, some
 ascribe to it a shorter, and others a longer du-
 ration; but, I say, they all unanimously agree
 in declaring *it is mortal*^d. Their notion of the
 destruction of all particular intelligences in the
 universe is set by *Plutarch*, as we may come
 to observe afterwards, in a strong light.

AND indeed, from the account that *Cicero*
 gives us of the different opinions held by phi-

^c *Cic. Tuscul. Lib. I. cap. xxxi.*
 32. *Arnobius* keenly argues
 from the same principles against
 the natural immortality of the
 soul. *Adv. Gen. Lib. II. p. 36,*
et.

^d *Cic. ubi sup. Phil. de Placit.*
Philos. Lib. IV. cap. vii. Diog.
Laert. in Zenon. p. 201. E. Vid.
Senec. de Consolat. ad Marcium,
cap. xix.

philosophers about the *nature* of the soul, one may easily judge, what great numbers must have denied its immortality. "Some, *says he*, make " it the *heart*; others the *blood* about the heart; " some a particular *part* of the brain; others " are not pleased with any of these, but place " it, some in the heart, and others in the " brain; some make it *breath*, or *air*; others " *fire*; some *harmony*; others *number*, and some " again make it *nothing at all*, but a mere " *empty name*: and God knows, says Cicero, " which of these opinions is true; among us " it is a great question, which of them is most " likely." In the same manner one may learn from *Macrobius*, that the immortality of the soul was a doctrine far from being frequent among philosophers^f. So that Mr. *Blount's* observation is extremely just: *No subject*, says he, *whatever*, *has more entangled and ruffled the thoughts of the wisest men, than this concerning our future state; it has been controverted in all ages by men of the greatest learning and parts*. *Justin Martyr* elegantly says, that *having, as it were, ignorance divided among them, they fought one against another*^h.

THUS a great many philosophers rejected the immortality of the soul: nor did they want disciples among the bulk of mankind. The no-

^e Cic. *Tuscul.* Lib. I. cap. ix, x. xi.

^f *Macrobius* in *Sonn. Scip.* Lib. I. cap. xiv. p. 57.

^g *Oracles of Reason*, p. 118.

Vid. *Theodoret. Græcar. Affect. Curat.* Serm. 5. p. 72, &c.

^h *Just. M. ad Græc. Cohort.*

§ 8.

tice that is taken of the rise of this doctrine, or
 who the particular person was, that *first* broached
 it, and proposed it to the world, is a shrewd
 evidence, that in ancient times in some part of
 the earth, it was no common popular opinion,
 but rather a thing quite new, and never before
 heard of. It matters not whether *Zamolxis* was
 long before *Pythagoras*, as *Herodotus* imagines, or
 whether he was his *freed man* and disciple: the
 report concerning him is pretty well attested,
 namely, "That he *first* introduced among the
 " *Getæ* the knowledge of the soul's being im-
 " mortal; (which from hence, as *Jamblichus*,
 " seems to insinuate, was propagated to other
 " neighbouring nations) and thereby acquired
 " the character of being the greatest of the
 " Godsⁱ." Nay *Plato*, who was long after,
 mentions it oftner than once, particularly in his
Phædo, as an opinion common and popular in
 his time, "that there is no future state of
 " existence; but that when the soul parts from
 " the body, it is no more, it dies along with
 " it, in the very minute of parting, it vanishes
 " like a vapour or smoak, which flies off, and
 " disperses, and has no existence^k." And in
 truth, *Socrates* himself seems once in his life,
 to have had no better notion of it: "When I
 " was young, *says he*, I had a wonderful pas-
 " sion for that part of learning, which they

ⁱ *Jamblic. de Vit. Pythag.* his acquiring the character of a
 cap. xxx. p. 146. *Strabo* (Lib. God.
 VII. p. 297. D.) seems to ac- ^k *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 69. E.
 count in another manner, for 70. A. 77. B. 80. D. v. 1.

“ call the study or knowledge of *nature*. Fre-
 “ quently did I turn myself every way, and
 “ bend all my wits to apprehend, whether it
 “ was the *blood* whereby we perceive and un-
 “ derstand things, or *air* or *fire*; or whether
 “ it was none of these, but a man’s *brains*,
 “ which contained the sense of hearing, see-
 “ ing and smelling, from which might pro-
 “ ceed memory and opinion; and these be-
 “ coming sedate and composed might give rise
 “ to knowledge¹.” In all which *Socrates* pur-
 sued the common rout of philosophers, and
 had no suspicion that a *pure spirit*, an *immate-
 rial soul*, is lodged in every man, as the seat
 and cause of all our perceptions. It was, I say,
 the popular opinion, that the soul is nothing but
 a portion of *air*, which disperses, and is no
 more, when a man breaths his last. This was
 keenly embraced by *Epicurus*: *dismissed*, says
 he, *from the body, like smoak it is scattered*^m.

Discedit in auras,

*Et gelidos artus in leti frigore linquit*ⁿ.

AND some moderns, liking to imitate *Seneca*°,
 express themselves no otherwise:

Comme se perd en un moment

Cette portion d’air dans le corps enfermée,

Que le plus actif element

Developpe & pousse en fumée;

¹ *Plat.* ubi supra, p. 96.

^m *Sext. Empir. adv. Math.*

Lib. VIII. p. 325. E.

ⁿ *Lucret. Lib. III. v. 401.*

^o *Vid. Troad. Act. 4. Chor.*

Comme

Comme au soufle des aquilons
 On voit bien-tôt évanouïe
 Une grosse nuée ou de grêle ou de pluie,
 Qui d'un deluge afreux menace les valons ;
 Ainsi s'épand cette ame vaine,
 Qui meut tous les ressorts de la machine humaine.
 Tout meurt en nous, quand nous mourons :
 La mort ne laisse rien, & n'est rien elle-même ;
 Du peu du tems que nous durons
 Ce ne que le moment extreme^p.

PERHAPS an observation of *Philostratus*, which seems to be founded on this doctrine, is too fine a piece of curiosity to be here neglected. " Having made, *says he*, many conjectures for explaining the ebbing and flowing of the mediterranean sea, *Apollonius* seems to me to have found out the truth: for in one of his letters to the *Indians*, he reports that the ocean being driven by the winds, which arise from the many chasms in the earth under the water and about it, it thereby flows and is carried towards land; but when the wind subsides, like the fetching of one's breath, it then retires and goes back again. And indeed, *says he*, the truth of this is confirmed from the case of sick people in *Gades*; for while the water is flowing, the souls do not leave their dying bodies: which would by no means happen, if the wind was not coming in upon the land^q." So that

^p Bayl. Dictionaire. in He-
 naust.

^q *Philos. de Vit. Apoll. Lib. V*
 cap. ii.

Philostratus, who was at great pains to discredit the *christian revelation*, is of opinion, as I apprehend, that *peoples souls are only a breath of air, sometimes detained in their bodies by a contrary wind!*

Now if numbers of philosophers, even some of the first rank, denied the immortality of the soul; and if those philosophers who maintained it, did not make the discovery by any natural series or connexion of things; and never could have lighted on it by their own reasoning, as is fully manifest from the inconclusive proofs they afford us of their opinion; (nor can I well conceive any odds, whether they were *absolutely unable*, or they *never did* in any age arrive at it, notwithstanding their repeated enquiries, and their utmost efforts to discern it^r :) I say, if the immortality of the soul is a truth, that lyes so far beyond the reach and discovery of the most penetrating philosophers; is it to be thought, that those men, whom we have above supposed to come into the world, only with their bare powers and faculties, destitute of all foreign instruction and improvement, and to be left wholly to themselves, shall in any sort be able to search it out and apprehend it; and therein greatly exceed all the highest improvements of human nature; it is no easy matter, as I have before hinted, to withdraw one's thoughts from

^r Nam ut nihil interest utrum ens, an nemo esse possit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. III. cap. xxxii.*
 nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere; sic non intelligo quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapi-

sensible

sensible objects, and to enter into a series of abstracted speculations. This is really above the capacity of the bulk of mankind, whose heads, from their circumstances, must be continually crouded with sensible objects: and the difficulty, that one has to exert the mind in this manner, *Cicero* thinks is one cause that hinders people from apprehending the immortality of the soul: nor is it hard to conceive, that this cause will powerfully operate, and have its full effect, among men rude and unpolished, wholly in their own hands, having no information, no assistance from God, or any angel.

BUT let a man's thoughts be withdrawn from sensible objects, I would fain know, what are the particular objects with which his mind shall then be conversant? If he can have thoughts or apprehensions of any sort, without the presence of sensible ideas, he may perhaps be conscious of some inward powers and operations; but to repeat my former question, will he perceive a certain being within him, acting independently of body or matter, and capable of existing and acting by itself, in a separate state to eternity? Three of the greatest philosophers that antiquity has to boast of, *Cicero*, *Aristotle*, and *Plato*, found it vastly difficult, if not impossible, to apprehend the nature and immortality of the soul: nay they greatly blundered upon this important article, and thereby gave full proof that

¹ *Cic. Tus. 2. Lib. I. c. xxii. Anima, Lib. I. cap. i. Plat. in*
² *Id. ibid. Cap. xii. Arist. de Phed. p. 85. C.*

the difficulties which lay in their way, were to them unconquerable. And if these great men, these acute philosophers, were, in relation to this fundamental article of natural religion, thus at a loss, perplexed and involved; is it to be imagined that rude uncultivated man will be more refined and accurate in abstracted speculations, and by penetrating deeper into the nature of things, will clearly perceive, that the soul is a being distinct from the body, of a purely spiritual nature, capable of existing separately, and immortal? But how is it possible for such a perception to come in his mind? It is no evidence of sense; it is no matter of consciousness, or of intuitive knowledge.—— Do not we find, the acutest philosophers were never able to make the discovery? I see not by what means he can possibly attain to it. And will ever a man attribute existence to a particular being, whereof he can form no sort of idea or notion, and which, with respect to him, is really nothing?

INDEED *Cicero* seems to judge it highly absurd to deny the truth and existence of things, because we cannot *immediately* perceive them. And I confess, that in two particular cases it certainly is so; namely, when in our enquiries, we come by a natural connexion of things to a certain conclusion; and when we have reason to rely on the testimony of others, concern-

* *Cic. Tuscul. Lib. I. cap. xxii.*

ing a particular truth or matter of fact. Thus, though I cannot *immediately* or *directly* perceive the equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right ones; yet, since I am led by a plain connexion of things to this conclusion, it would be highly absurd of me to deny it: and if an intelligent being, upon whose knowledge and veracity I have reason to depend, shall inform me, that the *subject* of thought in every man is a particular being wholly distinct from matter, which survives the body, and shall exist in a separate state to eternity; I should act most absurdly, if I withheld my assent, though I can form no *immediate* notion of such a being. But where there is no connexion of things present to the mind, no information from others, that assures us of the existence of beings, which we are not able *immediately* to apprehend; it would, in my opinion, be highly absurd in any man, to assert the existence of such beings; nor can I imagine any possible way, whereby the mind of man can come to conjecture, that such beings are really existing.

I would therefore, upon the whole, beg leave to conclude, that men coming into the world, only with their bare powers, void of all ideas, having no foreign aid or instruction, but wholly left to their own acquisitions, cannot be judged capable of themselves, to discern the immortality of the soul, and a future state of existence: of which, ever since the propagation of the *gospel*, every despicable old woman, every
the

the meanest peasant, have rested fully assured*.
So that,

HERE is one great fundamental article of natural religion, not discoverable by mankind without the help of foreign instruction or revelation. And in this particular, I am justified by some learned men of great reputation.

“ WE have, *says Mr. Locke*, the ideas of
“ matter and thinking, but possibly shall never
“ be able to know, whether any mere material
“ being thinks, or no; it being impossible for
“ us, by the contemplation of our own ideas,
“ without revelation, to discover, whether om-
“ nipotency has not given to some systems of
“ matter fitly disposed, a power to perceive and
“ think, or else joined and fixed to matter so
“ disposed a thinking immaterial substance; it
“ being in respect of our notions, not much
“ more remote from our comprehension to con-
“ ceive, that GOD can, if he pleases, superadd
“ to matter a faculty of thinking, than that
“ he should superadd to it another substance
“ with a faculty of thinking; since we know
“ not wherein thinking consists, nor to what
“ sort of substances the Almighty has been
“ pleased to give that power, which cannot be
“ in any created being, but merely by the good
“ pleasure and bounty of the creator. For I
“ see no contradiction in it, that the first eter-
“ nal thinking being, should, if he pleased, give

* *Augustin. ad Volus. Epist. 3. Serm. 5. p. 81.*
p. 6. B. Vid. *Euseb. Præp. E-* * *Locke's Essay, Book IV.*
vang. Lib. I. cap. iv. p. 13. chap. iii. p. 140.
Theodor. Græcar. Affect. Curat.

“ to certain systems of created senseless matter,
“ put together as he thinks fit, some degrees
“ of sense, perception, and thought: though,
“ as I think, I have proved, *Lib. IV. chap. x.*
“ it is no less than a contradiction to suppose
“ matter (which is evidently in its own nature
“ void of sense and thought) should be that
“ eternal first thinking being. What certainty
“ of knowledge can any one have, that some
“ perceptions, such as *v. g.* pleasure and pain,
“ should not be in some bodies themselves,
“ after a certain manner modified and moved,
“ as well as that they should be in an imma-
“ terial substance, upon the motion of the parts
“ of body? Body, as far as we can conceive,
“ being able only to strike and affect body; and
“ motion, according to the utmost reach of our
“ *ideas*, being able to produce nothing but mo-
“ tion; so that when we allow it to produce
“ pleasure or pain, or the *idea* of a colour or
“ sound, we are fain to quit our reason, go
“ beyond our *ideas*, and attribute it wholly to
“ the good pleasure of our maker. For since
“ we must allow he has annexed effects to
“ motion, which we can no way conceive mo-
“ tion able to produce, what reason have we
“ to conclude, that he could not order them
“ as well to be produced in a subject we can-
“ not conceive capable of them, as well as in a
“ subject we cannot conceive the motion of mat-
“ ter can any way operate upon? I say not this,
“ that I would any way lessen the belief of the
“ soul's immateriality: I am not here speaking of
“ pro-

“ probability, but knowledge; and I think not
“ only, that it becomes the modesty of philo-
“ sophy, not to pronounce magisterially, where
“ we want that evidence that can produce
“ knowledge; but also, that it is of use to us,
“ to discern how far our knowledge does reach;
“ for the state we are at present in, not being
“ that of vision, we must in many things
“ content ourselves with faith and probability:
“ and in the present question about the imma-
“ teriality of the soul, if our faculties cannot
“ arrive at demonstrative certainty, we need not
“ think it strange. All the great ends of mo-
“ rality and religion are well enough secured
“ without philosophical proofs of the soul’s im-
“ materiality; since it is evident, that he who
“ made us at first begin to subsist here sen-
“ sible intelligent beings, and for several years
“ continued us in such a state, can and will
“ restore us to the like state of sensibility in
“ another world, and make us capable there to
“ receive the retribution he has designed to
“ men, according to their doings in this life.
“ And therefore it is not of such mighty ne-
“ cessity to determine one way or t’other, as
“ some over zealous for or against the imma-
“ teriality of the soul, have been forward to
“ make the world believe. Who either, on the
“ one side, indulging too much their thoughts
“ immerfed altogether in matter, can allow no
“ existence to what is not material: or who,
“ on the other side, finding not *cogitation* with-
“ in the natural powers of matter, examined
“ over

“ over and over again, by the utmost intention
“ of mind, have the confidence to conclude;
“ that omnipotency itself cannot give percep-
“ tion and thought to a substance, which has
“ the modification of solidity. He that con-
“ siders how hardly sensation is in our thoughts
“ reconcilable to extended matter, or existence
“ to any thing that hath no extension at all,
“ will confess that he is very far from certainly
“ knowing what his soul is. It is a point,
“ which seems to me to be put out of the
“ reach of our knowledge; and he who will
“ give himself leave to consider freely, and
“ look into the dark and intricate part of each
“ *hypothesis*, will scarce find his reason able to
“ determine him fixedly for or against the soul’s
“ materiality. Since on which side soever he
“ views it, either as an unextended substance,
“ or as a thinking extended matter, the dif-
“ ficulty to conceive either, will, whilst either
“ alone is in his thoughts, still drive him to
“ the contrary side. An unfair way which
“ some men take with themselves; who be-
“ cause of the unconceiveableness of something
“ they find in one, throw themselves violently
“ into the contrary hypothesis, though altoge-
“ ther as unintelligible to an unbiassed under-
“ standing. This serves not only to shew the
“ weakness and the scantiness of our know-
“ ledge, but the insignificant triumph of such
“ sort of arguments, which, drawn from our
“ own views, may satisfy us that we can find
“ no certainty on one side of the question;
but

“ but do not at all thereby help us to truth, by
 “ running into the opposite opinion, which;
 “ on examination, will be found clogged with
 “ equal difficulties. For what safety, what
 “ advantage to any one is it, for the avoid-
 “ ing seeming absurdities, and, to him, unsur-
 “ mountable rubs he meets with in one opi-
 “ nion, to take refuge in the contrary, which
 “ is built on something altogether as inexpli-
 “ cable, and as far remote from his compre-
 “ hension? It is past controversy, that we have
 “ in us something that thinks; our very doubts
 “ about what it is confirm the certainty of
 “ its being, though we must content ourselves
 “ in the ignorance of what kind of being it is:
 “ and it is in vain to go about to be *sceptical* in
 “ this, as it is unreasonable in most other cases
 “ to be positive against the being of any thing,
 “ because we cannot comprehend its nature. For
 “ I would fain know what substance exists that
 “ has not something in it, which manifestly
 “ baffles our understanding?”

THUS that acute and famous philosopher re-
 presents it impossible to understand with any
 certainty, whether the nature of the soul is *ma-*
terial or not. And the *immateriality* of the
 soul being the supposed proof from reason and
 philosophy of its immortality, since, according
 to Mr. *Locke*, no man can arrive to a certain
 knowledge of the former; it is manifest, that,
 in his opinion, mankind are not capable of dis-
 covering the truth of the latter. And indeed
 he expressly affirms, that *life and immortality,*
which

which Christ hath brought to light through the gospel, neither was, nor could be made out by natural reason, without revelation.

OF the same opinion is the celebrated Mr. d' Ablancourt, who openly confesses that we learn the immortality of the soul, not from natural reason, but from revelation. This gentleman, one of the finest wits in France, "having
" maintained in a conversation, *that it was*
" *religion, and not natural reason, that taught*
" *us the immortality of the soul*; he composed
" a discourse which he sent to Mr. Patru, in
" order to justify his opinion. In this discourse
" he avers, *that the perfect knowledge of our*
" *souls is beyond the common reach of our un-*
" *derstanding; and that there are no reasons*
" *which can prove they are immortal.* He re-
" cites the most considerable of those reasons
" that are commonly alledged, and adds, *they*
" *are indeed good to confirm in its faith a soul*
" *already enlightened by grace; but they are not*
" *able to convince a man that has no other light,*
" *but that of nature.* He takes notice of the
" ignorance of philosophers in this article, and
" of the confusion of Aristotle's doctrine about
" it; and observes that one needs not wonder
" at it; *the light of the gospel had not yet en-*
" *lightened the world, and this truth being so*
" *much above human reason, stood in need of su-*
" *pernatural help to be known.*—You must con-
" fess, says he, to his friend Mr. Patru, that
" *it is faith which makes us christians, and not*
" *natural reason; and that I am at liberty to*
" say

“ say, as a natural philosopher, the resurrection
 “ cannot happen; provided I believe that God by
 “ his infinite power can do things that are im-
 “ possible to nature. So that I spoke no otherwise
 “ than I should have done, when I said that human
 “ reasoning cannot make me comprehend that our
 “ souls are immortal; and that it was the holy scrip-
 “ ture, and the revelation which God hath made
 “ to his church, that taught me this truth, which
 “ is the foundation of all our religion².”

WHAT I have hitherto proposed serves only to explain the insufficiency of human powers to find out arguments, from the *nature of the soul*, that lead one to apprehend its immortality. And therefore it may be reckoned, that our next attempt should be to consider, whether mankind, left to themselves, are able to come to the knowledge of this truth, without foreign instruction, by a train of reasoning that arises from one's attending to the perfections and *providence* of God in relation to human affairs?

No doubt one may produce from the writings of the ancients a great many passages that seem to afford a favourable solution of this question.
 “ It was thought, that neither statues fixed in
 “ lead, nor triumphal crowns, could be re-
 “ wards lasting enough for such noble and il-
 “ lustrious deeds; so that a recompense more
 “ splendid and durable was sought for, where-
 “ by those should be adorned, who had pre-
 “ ferred virtue, honour, and glory, before sloth,

² Bayl. Dict. in Perrot, Rem. L.

“ lust,

“ pleasure, and even life itself. And indeed it
 “ is as just and equitable, as *that* is fitting and
 “ highly to be approved, that the same abodes
 “ in another world should not be allotted to the
 “ wicked after death, into which men of virtue
 “ and integrity are received,” &c.^a These reflections are in the treatise *De Consolatione* that goes under *Cicero*’s name. Let us see in what manner the ancients argued, upon moral regards, for a future state of rewards and punishments. But as all such reflections are founded in our knowledge of the being, the nature, and the providence of God; so one should think that no man can be supposed to discern, in this manner, a future state of existence, till he shall be satisfied, there is a God, what are the perfections of his nature, and how far he concerns himself with human kind: which are things about which we have as yet made no inquiry. So that the question just now proposed, not being proper to be handled in this place, we shall here pass it by, and go to examine our second article. Only I would here have it remarked, that,

THOSE ancient philosophers, who seem to have had any notion of the immortality of the soul, or of a future state of existence, do not seem to have acquired the knowledge of this truth, from attending to the perfections and providence which we conceive in the deity.

^a The rest of this quotation into the original of moral virtue is written out in my *Enquiry* into the original of moral virtue, p. 81.

The *Pythagoreans*, in their doctrine of *transmigration*, have by no means regarded such principles: *Plato* himself, in several instances, seems to profess the same sentiments that are held by the *Stoicks*: and these philosophers, who came to be the most distinguished of any, are so far from apprehending, that departed souls are disposed of in another world, by any interposition of the righteous judgment of God; that, in consequence of the common opinion of the soul's *materiality*, so far as they believe a future state of existence, they openly maintain, nay *Cicero* himself maintains, that "human souls take their place in the universe among other *material* beings, according to the particular *subtlety* of their nature, or as their *specifick gravity* happens to determine it^b." By which means the

^b Eam porro (persuadent mathematici) naturam esse quatuor omnia gignentium corporum, ut quasi partita habeant inter se & divisa momenta: terrena & humida suo pte nutu & suo pondere ad pares angulos in terram & in mare ferantur: reliquæ duæ partes. una ignea, altera animalis, ut illæ superiores in medium locum mundi gravitate ferantur & pondere, sic hæc rursus rectis lineis in cœlestem locum subvolent, sive ipsa natura superiora adpetente, sive quod a gravioribus leviora natura repellantur. Quæ cum consent, perspicuum debet esse animos, cum e corpore excesserint, sive illi sint animales, id est, spirabiles, sive

ignei, sublime ferri. — Is autem animus, qui, si est horum quatuor generum ex quibus omnia constare dicuntur, ex inflammata anima constat, (ut potissimum videri video Panætio) superiora capeſſat necesse est: nihil enim habent hæc duo genera proni, & supera semper petunt. Ita, sive dissipantur, procul a terris id evenit; sive permanent & conservant habitum suum, hoc etiam magis necesse est ferantur ad cœlum, & ab his perrumpatur & dividatur crassius hic & concretus aer, qui est terræ proximus: calidior est enim, vel potius ardentior animus, quam est hic aer, quem modo dixi crassum atque concretum: quod ex eo whole

whole is attributed to a certain *fatality*, wherein one has no notion of the superintendency and equity of *Providence*. And I am apt to think, that under the influence of such apprehensions, one shall not readily light on those *moral arguments*, whereby we *now* successfully plead an after-state of retribution.

sciri potest, quia corpora nostra terreno principiorum genere confecta, ardore animi concalescunt. Accedit, ut eo facilius animus evadat ex hoc aere, quem sæpe jam appello, eumque perrumpat, quod nihil est animo velocius, nulla est celeritas quæ possit cum animi celeritate contendere. Qui si permanet incorruptus, sui que similis, necesse est ita feratur, ut penetret & dividat omne cælum hoc, in quo nubes, imbres, ventique coguntur; quod & humidum & caliginosum est propter exhalationes terræ. Quam

regionem cum superavit animus, naturamque sui similem contigit & agnovit; junctus ex anima tenui & ex ardore solis temperato ignibus insistit, & finem altius se efferendi facit. Cum enim sui similem & levitatem & calorem adeptus est, tanquam *paribus exanimatus ponderibus*, nullam in partem movetur: eaque ei demum naturalis est sedes, cum ad sui simile penetravit, in quo nulla re egens aletur & sustentabitur iisdem rebus, quibus astra sustentantur & aluntur. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. Lib. I. cap. xvii, xviii, xix.*

S E C T. V.

So far are the bulk of mankind from being capable, of themselves, to discern the being and perfections of God, that from their notions of things they are directly led to attribute divinity to the heavenly bodies, and to acknowledge those luminaries to be the proper objects of religious worship. This confirmed from the case of all ancient philosophers, excepting Anaxagoras, who are not atheists.

WE shall next enquire, *whether mankind, left wholly to themselves, seem able to discern the being, the nature, and perfections of God; I mean that God, in relation to whom Cæcilius expresses himself thus contemptibly: Unde autem, says he, vel quis ille, aut ubi Deus unicus, solitarius, destitutus; quem non gens libera, non regna, non saltem Romana superstitio noverunt?* I say I mean “that one self-existent, eternal, “infinite mind, not involved or entangled in “matter, but absolutely independent, and subject to no change; who in his all-comprehensive wisdom conceived the plan of this “universe; who by his almighty power, according to that intellectual plan, for his own

* Minuc. Fel. cap. x. p. 62.

“ glorious

“ glorious ends, brought forth this whole com-
 “ plexion of things into being; who in his
 “ sovereign providence still upholds and go-
 “ verns the great stupendous fabrick, by esta-
 “ blished laws, infinitely wise and good; who,
 “ to direct the conduct of mankind, as supreme
 “ ruler, hath, in the nature of things, published
 “ a system of moral laws guarded by proper
 “ sanctions; who, being every where present,
 “ infallibly perceives, and unweariedly attends
 “ to all the thoughts and actions of his rational
 “ creatures; and who *hereafter* will bring all
 “ men to judgment, and reward us, every man
 “ according to the deeds done in the body, ac-
 “ cording to the moral dispositions of the mind,
 “ without respect of persons, whether we have
 “ done good or whether we have done evil.”

This is that God, about whom, I hope, we are all agreed in putting the question. And

VERY certain it is, that in these latter times
 the existence of this *infinite mind* has been
 clearly demonstrated, from those wonderful ef-
 fects of power, wisdom and goodness, that are
 every where about us in the world. But I am
 not here to examine, whether people *now* im-
 proved, as I apprehend, by supernatural revela-
 tion, are able to explain and demonstrate the
 being and perfections of the deity. The ques-
 tion is,

WHETHER mankind left to themselves, hav-
 ing no revelation, no tradition, can be judged
 capable, without all foreign instruction, to search

out, and discern this fundamental article of natural religion ?

^d Il n'y a rien de plus facile que de connoître qu'il y a un Dieu, si vous n'entendez par ce mot qu'une cause première & universelle. Le plus grossier & le plus stupide païsan est convaincu que tout effet a une cause, & qu'un très-grand effet suppose une cause dont la vertu est très grande. Pour peu qu'il réfléchisse ou de soi-même, ou par l'avertissement de quelqu'un, il voit clairement cette vérité. Le consentement général ne souffre aucune exception à cet égard-là; on ne trouve ni aucun peuple, ni aucun particulier, qui ne reconnoisse une cause de toutes choses. Les athées, sans en excepter un seul, signeront sincèrement avec tous les orthodoxes cette thèse: *il y a une cause première, universelle, éternelle, qui existe nécessairement, & qui doit être appelée Dieu.* Tout est de plein pied jusques-là, personne ne fera un incident sur les mots, & il n'y a point des philosophes qui fassent entrer plus souvent le nom de Dieu dans leurs systèmes que les *Spinozistes*. Mais de là vous devez conclure que ce n'est point dans cette thèse si évidente que consiste le vrai état de la question. Un formulaire que les sectateurs de la fausseté peuvent signer conjointement avec ceux de la vérité est une chose captieuse, & nécessairement defectueuse. Il ne fait donc point de connoître

qu'il y a un Dieu, il faut de plus déterminer le sens de ce mot, & y attacher une idée; il faut, dis-je, rechercher quelle est la nature de Dieu, & c'est là où commence la difficulté. C'est un sujet que les plus grands philosophes ont trouvé obscur, & sur lequel ils ont été partagés en plusieurs sortes de sentimens fort contraires. — Il y a de grands philosophes dont les meilleures idées sont ridicules sur cela. Ceux qui en certains endroits parlent le plus noblement de Dieu, en parlent ailleurs d'une manière qui fait voir qu'ils le confondent avec la nature. On a donné de recueils des athéismes d'*Aristote*; & vous n'oseriez nier que le peuple parmi les Chrétiens ne se forme de notions si basses & si grossières de Dieu, que rien plus. Ne dites donc point que le sujet en question est si aisé qu'il ne faut qu'ouvrir les yeux pour le connoître. — C'est une question qui appartient à la plus profonde & à la plus abstraite philosophie, & par conséquent elle demande beaucoup de meditations & de discussions. *Continuat. des penſes divers, ch. xx. v. chap. xxi. lxiv. lxxxv. p. 430. and chap. civ.*

The great reason, as I apprehend, why most people have come to imagine the heathen world so very knowing in relation to the deity, is their affixing Jewish or Christian ideas to some

THIS

THIS is the question; and in order to come to some certainty about it, we must imagine to ourselves, as I proposed in the former article, *two*, or any number of men, at their first appearance upon earth, without any stock of ideas, having only their bare powers to *apprehend, judge, and infer*; and with respect to the acquiring of knowledge, given up to shift for themselves^e.

words and phrases, which heathen writers make use of in common with us. But how grossly thereby we impose upon ourselves, the following sections will clearly demonstrate. Here I shall transcribe this passage of Mr. Clerc: *Quam necessarium sit, says he, opiniones scriptorum, quos legimus, scire, ut mentem eorum usquequaque intelligamus, etiam ex hoc intelligere est, quod homines opinionibus plane diversis sæpe eodem utuntur sermone. Si tunc ex uno aut altero loco de sententia eorum judicium ferremus, existimarem eos similia sensisse, qui nihil simile cogitarunt. Paulus, exempli gratia, ita loquitur, Act. xvii. 27. Deus longe non est ab unoquoque nostrum, in ipso enim vivimus, & movemur, & sumus, &c. — Idem, Eph. iv. 30. præter alia, monet Ephesios, ne contristent Spiritum Sanctum Dei, in quo signati erant in diem redemptionis.*

At si quis lectis duntaxat verbis Pauli, neque sensum satis attendens, legat hæc verba Senecæ, neque aliunde norit Stoico-

rum placita, credet facile quiddam hac in re Paulo fuisse Senecam: Non sunt, inquit, ad cælum elevandi manus, nec exorandus ædituus, ut nos ad aures simulacri, quasi magis exaudiri possimus, admittat; prope est ad te Deus, tecum est, intus est. Ita dico, Lucili, sicer inter nos spiritus sedet, malorum, bonorumque nostrorum observator & custos; hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat.

Qui non legerit integram Senecæ epistolam (xli.) credet se legere potius verba Christiani apostolos imitati, quam philosophi ethnici. Ipse H. Grotius, Stoicorum dogmatum parum memor, hæc non plane aliena a Paulinis judicavit. At qui leget sequentia Senecæ, videbit sacrum istum spiritum, quem intra nos esse dicitur, esse ipsum animum humanum, partem animæ mundi, seu Dei Stoicorum, ac proinde ipsum Deum. Art. Critic. Part. II. § 1. cap. xiv. p. 142. Tom. I.

^e When I published my oration, I confess, I had no sus-

Now setting mankind before us in these circumstances, we are easily led to apprehend, that a man thus situated, "as he is conscious
" that all his own motions come from an in-

spicion, that any man would have been so weak, as to imagine, that in laying down only a *supposed* state, I thereby gave out what I really thought the real state of mankind. But since some reverend *brethren* are found liable to such weaknesses, I must here refer them to a *letter* writ in defence of my *oration*, wherein the ingenious author will teach them, "That Dr. "Tindal had intrenched himself behind an imaginary excellency of human nature, "and that in order to draw "him out to a fair open engagement, the *professor* only "pretends to furnish him with "men armed *cap-a-pie* for "his purpose." And indeed, it never once entered into my mind, that man in his original state was left to shift for himself in acquiring the knowledge of religion. As I have plainly enough professed in my oration, it is my real opinion, that God immediately revealed to the first of the race all the essential articles of natural religion. And however the particular words or phrases that originally signified the *true God*, might continue to make a part of the language of after ages; yet the original meaning of these words being quite lost, people came to un-

derstand by them, *only* the creatures of their own fancy.

But the clamour is very loud upon my representing mankind void of all *innate ideas* with respect to God and religion. Whether the author of *Christianity as old as the creation* maintains the doctrine of *innate ideas*, as it is commonly understood, I cannot positively say: but he talks of an *internal revelation*; of a *clear and distinct light that enlightens all men*; of an *intellectual communication between God and man*; of God's *immediately illuminating all men*; and of his *continuing daily to implant the law of nature in the minds of all men, christians as well as others*; with other expressions to the same purpose. But what this learned author observes in relation to *the light within* of the *Quakers*, may very well be applied to this doctrine of *innate ideas*; "The quakers, (*says he*, chap. "xii. p. 183.) are very positive, that there is in all mankind a principle of action "distinct from reason (which "is not inspiration) by which "all are to be governed in "matters of religion, as they "are by reason in other matters; and which they commonly call *the light within*." But, "was there any such

"ward

ward life or power, and are wholly at his own disposal; so he will certainly judge the same concerning all other things in motion, whose motions he doth not perceive to

principle, men destitute of all reason were as capable of knowing all matters of religion, as if they had been ever so rational. It is strange that all mankind should have a principle of acting, of which they never were sensible; nor can these modern discoverers tell them what it is, or how it operates." To this let me add the following reflections of the ingenious gentleman, who, in the letter above mentioned, honours my principles with a just vindication.

"Every hypothesis, says he, or assumption concerning the works or providence of God, that is found directly contrary to the experience of all mankind, falls very naturally into such an argument against his existence, as must oblige the assertors, either to give up their hypothesis, or admit the conclusion. I'll let you see this; (continues our author, answering Mr. Adams in his own merry way) Dr. Tindal's hypothesis differs from yours only as a cow differs from a calf. He assumes much, you content yourself with somewhat less; however ye jointly maintain this proposition, man comes into the world with original impressions of

God, and a determinate law of nature upon his soul. You both build your proposition upon the divine attributes: Tindal fixes upon the justice and goodness; you upon the infinite wisdom and whole perfection of the divine nature. But why climb up into heaven, to enquire whether man has two eyes or one; whether they are placed behind or before, &c? May not the spirit of a man answer for such things as are within the man? Cannot you, cannot every man, who believes there is a God, tell whether this notion enters his mind through his sense of hearing (which I have heard said is the inlet of faith) or if it sprung from a root which he still feels growing in his mind; or if it resulted from a sagacious enquiry into the nature of things, and that before he had heard the least whisper about such a doctrine as the existence of an infinite, spiritual, immaterial nature; I say, cannot every believer answer such questions for himself? Or, can any of them give any answer but this, I had often heard of the being of a God, long before I knew how to prove it?

arise

“ arise from some external cause or impulse.” Thus he will naturally conclude, that the several individuals of his own species, the *beasts* of the field, and the *fowls* of the air, are all of them living beings: and, in my opinion, as naturally will he attribute life to *fire*, to *winds*, and *storms*, and even to *rivers* and *seas*; which, one should think, holds true *in fact*, when we know that the ancients looked upon these things as Gods, and payed them religious worship^f,

“ If there are any infidels
“ in this great article, they
“ are either such as your *Soldanians*, who have no notion
“ of a deity, because they never heard any thing about
“ it; or they are such who
“ have searched their own minds
“ for *original Impressions* with
“ greater application than you
“ seem to have done, and upon
“ finding none have discarded
“ the notion of a deity altogether. And this is the very
“ principle upon which every
“ reasoning atheist (if ever there
“ was a reasoning atheist in the
“ world, which is not to be
“ doubted) has proceeded. He
“ had been taught, that as
“ certainly as there is a good,
“ just, and wise God, so certainly
“ he would find indelible impressions of that being upon his
“ own mind. The man searched,
“ and searched honestly,
“ without finding any such impressions; and therefore took
“ his teachers at their word,
“ and told them; that upon

“ *their own principles* he was
“ determined to say (and they
“ must not call him a fool for
“ so saying, until they could
“ furnish him with juster principles of knowledge) there is
“ no God! You taught me, said
“ he, that if man comes not
“ into the world with original
“ impressions of God, and a determinate law of nature upon
“ his soul; then he is not the
“ workmanship of an infinitely
“ good, and just, wise and perfect being. But my own experience and that of every
“ other honest man convinces
“ me, that man comes not into
“ the world, with such impressions: therefore——

“ Thus a little conceited false
“ philosophy keeps men hovering a while in some airy region of *deism*, and at length
“ settles them in downright
“ *atheism* and irreligion.”

^f Herodot. in *Clio*. cap. cxxxi.
cxxxviii. in *Thal*. cap. xvi. Pausan. in *Corinth*. L. IX. p. 55.
Strab. Lib. XV. p. 732. C. D.

Quid—

*Quidquid Humus, Pelagus, Cælum mirabile
gignunt,
Id duxere Deos, Colles, Freta, Flumina, Flam-
mas.*

Prudent. cont. Symmach. *Lib. I. § 297.*

BUT beyond all doubt, he will conceive the *heavenly bodies* to be all animated, and that by an inward life and power they perform all their motions.

It is likely indeed that we, who better understand the nature of those beings, and know them to be inanimate, may judge it unaccountably *filly* and absurd in any of human kind to look upon such lifeless bodies as animals. But when a man is left to his own notions of things, as his senses may happen to inform him, and is without all foreign instruction; how is it possible he can conceive of them otherwise? He knows that his motions proceed from his having life in himself; and when he sees his fellow men and the brute creatures about him capable of motion; for this very reason he apprehends, that those other beings have life also within them: and must not the same reason fully persuade him, that all other moving things, particularly the *heavenly bodies*, are animals? So naturally do mankind fall into such opinions, that ancient philosophers, notwithstanding all

Polyb. Hist. Lib. VII. p. 670. cap. lxi. Whereof we have the Remarkable is the story in like in Pausan. Arcad. p. 266. Elian. Var. Hist. Lib. XII. L. xxxv.

their

their improvement, could never overcome these prejudices, but always gave out, as I shall observe by and by, sun, moon, and stars to be animated. Nay *Thales*, as I have before hinted, *Empedocles*, and other philosophers attributed life to things in this lower world, such as the *load-stone*, *all plants* and *vegetables*, which every body now knows, are inanimate. And without doubt, the motions which *Thales* observed every where to obtain, in the whole, and in all the several parts of nature, induced him to apprehend, that not only the world is animated, but all things we see are full of Gods or *Demons*. So that, as the matter appears to me,

MANKIND left to themselves do naturally apprehend, that all moving things, whose motions are not the visible effects of some external cause, are animals &c.

*What divine monsters, O ye gods, were these?
Came they alive or dead upon the shore?*

*Alas! they liv'd too sure; I heard them roar,
All turn'd their sides, and to each other spoke;
I saw their words break out in fire and smoke.*

Dryd. Conq. of Mex.

Ἐν ἰδωμένῳ περ ταύτῳ (κί-
την) φρομένῳ ἐν τῇ γῆνι, ἢ
ἐνδρῳ, ἢ πτερειδῇ, κεχρησ-
μένῳ ἢ καὶ ζυμῳ, τί ποτε φήσο-
μεν ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῳ παύσῃ; κ. λ.
Μὴν ἀλλ' οὐ μετρίως εἰ ζῇ αὐτὸ
πρὸς τὸν ὅταν αὐτὸ αὐτὸ κι-
νῇ; Ἀδ. Ναὶ ζῇ. κ. λ. Πῶς γὰρ

εἰ; Plat. de Legib. Lib. X.
p. 895. C. Vol. 2. To the same
Purpose says *Mercurius Trisme-
gestus*: Πᾶν τοίνυν ἰσθὶ καθολικῶς,
ὡς τέκνον, τὸ ἐν ἐν κόσμῳ κινούμενον
ἢ καὶ μέωσιν ἢ αὐξήσιν· τὸ δ' ἐκ
κινούμενον καὶ ζῇ. *Pamandr. cap.*
xii. § 18.

AND

AND as a man, when he is sensible that his pleasures or pains depend upon the particular behaviour of his fellow men towards him, comes likewise to know from experience, that by presents, entreaties, acts of submission or prostration, he may appease his neighbour's anger, and engage his favour, whereby he prevents his own trouble, and provides for his safety and happiness: so when experience teaches him, or he apprehends, that his interests depend upon the *winds* and *storms*, upon the *heavenly bodies*, &c. (since he imagines they have life, motion or action in themselves) what course he observes towards his fellow men, the same or the like will he naturally follow towards those other beings, in order to appease their anger, or to engage their favour^h: only being sensible that those *animals*, as he apprehends them, have a greater and a more extensive influence or power over human affairs, than any other animated beings whatsoever, his imagination will be struck with greater dread and reverence, which will proportionally heighten his addresses, entreaties or prostrations towards them.

AFTER this manner, in my apprehension, the human mind left wholly to itself, *when it*

^h I am apt to think that the custom among the *heathens* of worshipping their Gods by *kissing the hand* had no other original. Vid. *Job*, chap. xxxi. 26, 27. *Nulli Deo ad hoc ævi supplicavit; nullum templum frequentavit; si sanum aliquod prætereat,*

nefas habet, adorandi gratia, manum labris admoveri. Apul. Apolog. i. p. 349. *Cæcilius, simulacro Serapidis denotato, ut vulgus superstitiosus solet, manum ori admovens, osculum labiis preffit.* Min. Fel. cap. ii. p. 24.

happens to reflect upon such things, will certainly proceed. And it matters not by what name those beings are called; which mankind having no foreign instruction, are naturally led thus to respect, and to distinguish from all others by their solemn addresses: they may call them *gods*; or by what other name they please; it is manifest they only regard them as some *considerable* beings, far superior to themselves, that have an influence upon their present circumstances, to render them in some degrees, happy or miserable in this world; and have no notion, no suspicion of any of those attributes and perfections, which we ascribe to the deity. From all which, by the way, the reader cannot but observe, how easy it is for mankind to slide into *idolatry*, and in what manner one may naturally trace out and explain its originalⁱ.

ⁱ Il ne faut point douter, que le culte du soleil n'ait été une de plus grandes sources de l'idolatrie: car de toutes les choses créées, c'est celle qui contribue le plus à la naissance, & à la vie de l'homme; & dont toutes les opérations sont les plus sensibles. Du soleil nous viennent le manger, les plaisirs, la lumière, &, pour ainsi dire, toute la vie. C'est pour celle que Dieu recommande à son peuple de se donner de garde de rendre à ce soleil un culte impie.

Il y a grande apparence que l'idolatrie a commencé en plusieurs endroits de la terre par le culte du soleil, comme il est en lui-même & sans autre

image, n'y en ayant aucune qui frappe la vue comme cet astre. Les Perses, comme nous dirons en son lieu, l'adoroient au commencement sans image; mais dans la suite de tems, ils lui rendirent un culte divin, & l'adorerent sous la figure d'un jeune homme qu'ils appelloient *Mithras*; culte qui s'étendit depuis dans la Grece & dans tout l'empire Romain. Les Grecs avoient longtems auparavant mis le soleil au nombre de leurs dieux; ils le representoient un jeune homme, latête raisonnante, & le plus souvent monté sur un char tiré à quatre chevaux.

Plusieurs de ces profanes adoroient non seulement le soleil,

THESE

THESE are considerations concerning the procedure of the human mind, towards the apprehending of the existence of a deity, which may be thought, perhaps, only so many bare conjectures: but as they seem natural and well founded, so I hope they will be admitted as certain and undoubted truths, when we shall have made it evident *in fact*, that the very philosophers, even the best and greatest among them, were of opinion, that the *heavenly bodies* are all *animals*. “For as in any matter to be
 “determined, by the sense of seeing or hear-
 “ing, we justly depend upon the testimony
 “of those persons, who have such senses in
 “greatest acuteness; so in any matter to be de-
 “termined by reason, we ought to trust only
 “to those, who are clear and distinct in their
 “understanding and judgment, such as the
 “philosophers^k.” And I leave it to every *deist* to recollect in what age, in what corner of the world, *where they have no revelation*, any one philosopher, upon rational grounds, thought otherwise.

mais aussi la lune & les étoiles; ces astres qui brilloient sur leur tête attiroient leur veneration. Je ne doute pas que le culte du soleil, de la lune & des étoiles n'ait commencé par ces astres mêmes. Mais pour ce qui est des elemens & des differentes parties de monde, je crois, comme saint *Augustin*, que les philosophes & tous ceux qui raiso-
 noient sur la nature se sont avi-

sez de les identifier avec les dieux reçus dans le paganisme, pour donner par ces allegories quelque couleur à une religion si impie & si extravagante. *Montfauc. l'Antiq. expl. Discour. Prelim. Paragr. 4. vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. I. cap. ix.*

^k *Sext. Emp. adv. Math. Lib. VIII.*

FROM

FROM what I have above hinted concerning *Thales*, it should seem, that this famous head of the *Ionick* philosophers, and the most distinguished of the *seven wise men*¹, must have held that the *stars* are animated. And as for *Pythagoras*, the celebrated head of the *Italick* philosophers, he tells us, “ that the air about the earth “ being void of motion breeds diseases, and all “ things in it are mortal; whereas that which “ is above the earth being always in motion, “ pure, and healthful, all things in it are im- “ mortal, and consequently *divine*: so that the “ *sun*, *moon* and *stars* are Gods, for they are “ all full of that heat or warmth, which is “ the cause or fountain of life^m.” The *Indian Brachmans* profess the same doctrineⁿ. *Plato* likewise declares, “ that we ought to esteem

¹ When one considers what sort of philosophy, *natural* and *moral*, had the good fortune to entitle those persons to this character, one has a most melancholy view of the amazing ignorance which at that time must have prevailed among mankind. With respect to those later ages that neglected tradition and leaned to their own understanding, *Laërtius* makes these reflections: *Sic*, says he, *humanam vitam prioribus seculis in clarissima luce versatam caligo ac tenebræ comprehendunt; & quod huic pravitati congruens erat, postquam sublata sapientia est, tum demum sibi homines sapientum nomen vindicare ceperunt.* — O mis-

rum calamitosumque seculum, quo per orbem totum septem soli fuerunt, qui hominum vocabulo cicerentur: nemo enim potest jure dici homo, nisi qui sapiens est. Sed si cæteri omnes præter ipsos stulti fuerunt, ne illi quidem sapientes: quia nemo sapiens esse vere, judicio stultorum potest. Adeo ab his absuit sapientia, ut ne postea quidem, incremente doctrinæ, & multis magnisque ingeniis in id ipsum semper intentis, potuerunt perspicere veritas & comprehendere. *Institut. Lib. IV. cap. i.*

^m *Diog. Laert. in Pythag. p. 220. C.*

ⁿ *Philost. de vit. Apoll. Lib. III. cap. xxxiv.*

“ the

“ the heavenly bodies so many animals. And
 “ indeed, *says he*, the stars are all of a *divine*
 “ nature, having each of them a most beauti-
 “ ful body, and a *mind* the most happy and
 “ excellent. — As for those things whose mo-
 “ tions are irregular, which is mostly the case
 “ with things here below, they are destitute
 “ of judgment and understanding: but the
 “ heavenly bodies being always steady and uni-
 “ form in their motions, hereby they make it
 “ manifest that they are *wise and intelligent be-*
 “ *ings*. — So that this is the nature of the
 “ *stars*, they make an extreme fine appearance;
 “ their motions and revolutions are wonder-
 “ fully beautiful and harmonious; and they pro-
 “ vide all animals with whatever is needful and
 “ convenient for them.” And in another place,
 the same philosopher reports, “ that it is im-
 “ pious and highly displeasing to the *stars*, par-
 “ ticularly to *these great gods*, the *sun* and *moon*,
 “ to alledge that their motions are irregular.”
 Of the same opinion is *Aristotle*, when he inter-
 poses this caution against the doctrine of *Anaxa-*
goras. “ We conceive, *says he*, the *stars* as
 “ if they were mere lifeless bodies, only ranged
 “ in a certain order; but we must know, that
 “ they are *living active beings*.” *Zeno* also
 affirms, “ that the *sun*, *moon* and *stars* are each
 “ of them an *intelligent* and *wise* lucid fire.”

° *Plat. in Epinom.* p. 981. E.
 982. Vol. II.
 P *Id. de Legib.* Lib. VII.
 p. 821. B.

1 *Arist. de Cal.* Lib. II.
 cap. xii. p. 464. C.
 1 *Stob. Ecl. Phys.* Lib. I.
 cap. xxiv. p. 57.

But I need not insist upon an article so well known to all who have read or heard of the opinions of ancient philosophers. I shall only observe further in what manner *Balbus* and *Galen* pretended to reason upon this article.

BALBUS is introduced by *Cicero* in the character of a *stoick* philosopher, and he goes about to prove by several arguments, that the heavenly bodies are living beings, or things animated. “Forasmuch, *says he*, as the heat of
“the sun is like to that heat, which is in
“the bodies of animals, it must be allowed,
“that the sun and other stars are *animals*. And
“it is highly probable that those heavenly be-
“ings have a *fine understanding*; since they in-
“habit the pure *æther*, and are nourished by
“those vapours that arise from the seas and
“earth, which must be greatly purified before
“they can come their length^f. But the steady

^f It should seem that people in all ages have had an apprehension that the great parts of the world stand in need of nourishment. And by what means this nourishment is conveyed to them, the moderns explain after this manner. Their account of it is indeed very different from that of the ancients, but it looks so feasible that one can hardly refuse to confess the truth of it. It really seems to raise in one's mind a grand idea of the great architect and preserver, who has appointed great numbers of particular bodies to travel through

the wide universe under the direction of certain established laws, whereby they are unerringly brought at proper seasons to afford convenient supplies to every sun, and to every planet, which in their present use seem all necessarily subject to waste and decay.

In periheliis cometarum illorum qui ad usque atmosphaeram solis descendunt, in immensum augeri debebunt eorum caudæ. Vapor enim in spatiis illis liberrimis perpetuo rarefcit ac dilatatur. Qua ratione fit ut cauda omnis ad extremitatem superiorem latior sit quam juxta caput

“ order

“ order and regularity, which the heavenly bo-
 “ dies observe in their motions, is a full proof
 “ of their *sense* and *understanding*: for what is
 “ the thing or being that can observe propor-
 “ tion and uniformity in its motions, without
 “ judgment and design, in which there is no-
 “ thing inconsiderate, inconsistent, or fortui-
 “ tous? Nor can this eternal order and regu-
 “ larity in the heavenly beings be imputed to
 “ nature, which is destitute of reason; nor yet
 “ to *fortune*, which affects variety, and will
 “ not admit of constancy. Manifest therefore
 “ it is, that those beings do by *their own power*,
 “ *wisdom* and *divinity direct their own motions*.
 “ It is certainly well observed by *Aristotle*, that
 “ all things in motion are moved either by na-
 “ ture, or by an external force, or by an inward
 “ voluntary power. Now the *sun*, *moon* and
 “ *stars*, cannot have their motions from nature;
 “ for in this case, they must either by their
 “ gravity fall downward, or by their lightness
 “ mount upward; whereas they revolve in an
 “ orb. Nor can it be said, that their motions
 “ are owing to an external force, which over-
 “ powers their natural tendency; for what force
 “ can surmount this tendency? So that we
 “ must conclude, *their motions are voluntary*
 “ *and wholly in their own power*. And the
 “ man who observes thus much, is not only

cometæ. Ea autem rarefactione
vaporem perpetuo dilatatum dif-
fundi tandem & spargi per cælos
universos, deinde paulatim in
planetis per gravitatem suam at-

trahi & cum eorum atmosphæris
misceri, rationi consentaneum vi-
detur, &c. Newt. princip. Prop.
41. p. 472. & Prop. 42. p. 480.

“ ignorant, but impious, if he denies they are
 “ gods.” Of this impiety however was *Lu-*
cretius guilty, who, without confessing their
 divinity, seems to think they are animated
 beings, and is not sure but their motions may
 arise from their being obliged to travel through
 the heavens in seeking after their proper food :
 (which is the reason, as *Cleanthes**, why the
 sun keeps always within the *tropicks*.)

*Sive ipsi serpere possunt,
 Quo cujusque cibum vocat, atque invitat eunteis,
 Flammea per cælum pascenteis corpora passim.*

Lucr. Lib. V. v. 523.

As for *Galen*, in that excellent treatise con-
 cerning the *usefulness of the parts of the human*
body, wherein he all along professes a deep sense
 of the great goodness, wisdom, and power of a
forming mind; he expressly declares, “ that as
 “ the man who contemplates the heavens, will
 “ immediately admire the beauty of those bo-
 “ dies, particularly of the sun, of the moon
 “ next, and then of the stars; so it is reason-
 “ able to think, that by how much the sub-
 “ stance of those bodies is purer, by so much

* *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. cap. xv, xvi.* I cannot forbear ob-
 serving, that *Origen*, having pro-
 duced several texts of scripture in
 order to prove, that the heavenly
 bodies are intelligent rational be-
 ings, reasons much after the
 same manner with *Balbus*: *Stellæ*
verò, cum tanto ordine, ac tanta
ratione moveantur, ut in nulla

prorsus cursus earum aliquando
visus sit impeditus; quomodo non
est ultra omnem stoliditatem, tan-
tum ordinem, tantamque disci-
plinæ observantiam dicere, ab
irrationalibus exigi vel expleri?
Orig. de princip. Lib. I. cap. vii.
 * *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. III.*
cap. xiv.

“ the

“ the *mind that animates them* is better and
 “ more perfect, than the mind that animates
 “ these earthly bodies. If you attend to *Plato*,
 “ *says he*, to *Aristotle*, *Hipparchus*, *Archime-*
 “ *des*, and many other such characters, you
 “ will observe a rational nature in men them-
 “ selves. And if in so great a *buddle* of things
 “ (for what else can you call a composition of
 “ *flesh, blood, phlegm*, and both the *biles*?) there
 “ is found so excellent a mind; how great must
 “ the excellency of that *mind* be, which is in
 “ the *sun*, the *moon*, and other *stars*?” And
 in another place; “ the *stars*, *says he*, are equal-
 “ ly resplendent and dry, and are therefore en-
 “ dowed with the *bighest intelligence*. And
 “ whoever denies it, seems to have no sense,
 “ and to be wholly ignorant of the excellency
 “ of the Gods?”

THUS ancient philosophers of the greatest reputation, in observing the motions and influences of the heavenly bodies, were led to conceive, they are *animated* beings. And it should seem, that people in those days were so prodigiously zealous in defence of this opinion, that *Anaxagoras* in a solemn trial was found guilty of *impiety* in maintaining the *sun* is only a *stone set on fire*; for which he was fined and banished, or, as others says, condemned to die²; or at least, as *Plutarch* gives out the matter, his

¹ *Gal. de Usu Part. Lib. XVII. cap. v. D. Vol. V. Vid. cap. iv. p. 702 Vol. IV.*

² *P. 449.*

³ *Id. Quod animi mores, &c.* ⁴ *D. Laert. in Anax. p. 36. A.*

friends found it necessary to convey him secretly out of *Athens*, in order to prevent his coming to such a trial and judgment^a. Nor is it only the unthinking multitude that entertained so great a *veneration* for the heavenly bodies, as to judge that man profane and impious, who went about to deny their divinity; we see that philosophers are of the same sentiments. And it is not a little surprizing, that *Socrates* and *Plato* do particularly condemn this opinion of *Anaxagoras*, as highly absurd, and as the cause of much *atheism* and impiety. Nay *Plato* expressly affirms, *there can be no devotion or religion among mankind, without peoples believing that the heavenly bodies are really animated*^b. And so much was the world devoted to the notion of the sun's divinity, that they pronounced those *Ethiopians* mere *Atheists*, who, living in the *Torrid Zone*, were wont to curse the rising sun, because of his scorching heat, which forced them to fly for shelter to fens and marshy places^c.

BUT they are not *Heathens* only who maintain the stars are animated. This opinion seems so natural, and insinuates itself so easily into the human mind, that some *Jews* and *Christians* of considerable note have embraced it, and others are only doubtful and uncertain: The famous *Tycho-Brabe*, who was no common

^a *Plut. in Pericl.* p. 169. D. p. 967. C.

^b *Plat. in Apol. Socrat.* p. 26.

^c *Herod. in Melpon.* c. clxxxiv.

C. Vol. II. & *de Legib.* Lib. X. p. 886. B. V. 2. *Ibid.* Lib. XII.

Strab. Lib. XVII. p. 132. C.

spectator of the heavens, openly declares for it^d. *Maimonides*, as explained by Dr. *Cudworth*, expresses himself in this manner: "The stars, says he, and spheres are every one of them animated and endued with life, knowledge, and understanding. And they acknowledge him, who commanded, and the world was made, every one according to their degree and excellency, praising and honouring him as the angels do^e." And it is worth while to observe, that Lord *Herbert* is in some suspense about the matter, and seems rather inclined to favour the opinion of the ancients^f. In short,

^d *Voss. de Idololat. Lib. II. cap. xxx. p. 457.—460.* *Vossius* refers to the place, which I have above transcribed from *Origen*; but he takes no notice of what *Origen* reports to the same purpose in his books against *Celsus*. I shall therefore here write out his sentiments from thence, which in our present argument well deserve to be remarked.

Οἱ ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ ἀστέρες ζῶντες εἰσι λογικά καὶ σπυδαῖα, καὶ ἐφωτισμένοι παρὰ φωτὶ καὶ γνώσεως ὑπὸ σοφίας, ἥτις ἐστὶν ἀπαύγασμα φωτὸς αἰδίου. καὶ ᾧ τὸ μὲν αἰδιότητος φῶς αὐτῶν, ἔρπον ἐστὶν ὁ ἥλιος δημιουργοῦ· τὸ δὲ νοητὸν, τάχα καὶ αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς αὐτεξουσίᾳ ἐκκλησίου. καὶ ἡ δὲ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν παροικουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ βλέποντος καὶ συνιέντος τὸ ἀληθινὸν φῶς. καὶ οὕτως ἀντιμαζόντες γὰρ τὰ τηλικαῦτα ὅτι διὰ δημιουργήματα, καὶ ἀναξαρτοῦς μέγεθος ἀέθρου.

ἀστρονομία· ὅτι ὁ ἥλιος, καὶ σελήνη, καὶ ἀστέρες, τοιαῦτά φαμεν περιῆλθαι, καὶ σελήνης, καὶ ἀστέρων. ἀλλ' αἰδομένοί γε τὸ ἀφάτα ὑπερῶν ὑπερεχούσης θεότητος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἔτι καὶ μονογενὲς αὐτῷ ὑπερέχοντι τὰ λοιπὰ πνεύματα καὶ αὐτὸν ἥλιος, καὶ σελήνη, καὶ ἀστέρες εὐχαρίζονται ἐπὶ πάντι Θεῷ ἀλλ' ὅτι μονογενὲς αὐτῷ, κρείττον μὴ δεῖν εὐχαρίζεσθαι τοῖς ἀχρονόμοις· ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἀναπέμπουσιν ἡμᾶς βόλῃ μαλλον ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ ὡς εὐχαρίστησιν, ὅτι κατέλαβον πρὸς ἐαυτοὺς, ἢ μισέξουσιν ἡμᾶς τὸ ἀκλήκω δυνάμει τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πρὸς ἐαυτούς. *Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. V. p. 238.* Πολλὰ μᾶλλον ἐξ ὑμῶν, καὶ οὗτοι Θεὸν δοξάζουσιν τὸν Ἀδαν, ὅτι καὶ τὰ τηλικαῦτον ἥλιος παροικουῖν ἡμῖν θείᾳ, καὶ ὁφθαλμοῖς αὐτῶν. *Id. ibid. Lib. VIII. p. 422.*

^e *Cudw. Intell. Syst. chap. iv. p. 471.*

^f *Herbert de Relig. Gentil. cap. viii. p. 59.*

if I may judge from the experiments I have made, I violently suspect, that most common people even in christian *countries*, do in some sort apprehend the heavenly bodies are animated: and as to this, the reader may come perhaps to rest satisfied, if he will be pleased to make trial in some instances.

Now, as the *Heathen* were persuaded that the *luminaries* of heaven, are living beings or *animals*; and that mankind depend upon their influences, for their well-being and happiness: so in consequence of these apprehensions, they very naturally *put up their addresses* to those superior beings, and made them the objects of their religious worship. I do not mean, they conceived any of those beings under the notion, wherein we apprehend *our God*, *who alone is the proper object of a religious worship*. Of any notion of this sort, they were, certainly, wholly ignorant. They only regarded them, particularly the *sun*, and *moon*, as great beings of vast power and government, from whom they expected their greatest comforts and blessings.

THUS *Plato* informs us, that *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, in prosperity as well as adversity, fell prostrate upon the ground and worshipped the sun and moon at their rising and settings. In another place the same philosopher relates, that the first inhabitants of *Greece* apprehended the *sun*, and *moon*, the *earth*, the *stars* and

5 *Plat. de Legib. Lib. X. p. 387. D. Vol. II.*

heaven, as the only gods^h. And *Diodorus Siculus* reports, that men of old in *Ægypt* brought forth and judged to be the first of human kind, looking up to the heavens, and standing amazed at the nature of the universe, came to conceive, that the *sun and moon are the eternal and first deities*, to which all things owe their being and subsistenceⁱ. However the *Massagetæ* regarded the sun as the *only* deity, and sacrificed a horse to him^k. *Pliny* seems to favour the same opinion^l: and *Macrobius* goes about to prove that the sun is the *only* divinity, that was almost worshipped every where under various denominations^m. Mean while it should seem, that the *Albani*, a people in *Asia*, between the *Caspian* sea and *Iberia*, payed their chief devotion to the *moon*; to whom after an odd manner, they offered up human sacrificesⁿ. But the matter lying so obvious, that it cannot be called in question, but the worship of the heavenly bodies universally prevailed among all nations; I shall only remark, they attributed to the *sun* in particular the highest perfections. Thus,

THE *Ægyptians*, who had no notion of any *incorporeal* being in the universe, and in their apprehensions of the deity, went no higher than the heavenly bodies, or their *five elements*. As they esteemed the *sun* to be the *creator* of

^h *Id. in Cratyl.* p. 397. C. v. 1.

ⁱ *Diód. Sicul.* Lib. I. p. 10.

C. Vid. *Euseb. Præp. Evang.* Lib. III. cap. iii.

^k *Herodot. in Clio*, cap. cxxvi.

Strab. Lib. XI. p. 513. A.

^l *Plin.* Lib. II. cap. vi, vii.

^m *Macrobi. Saturn.* Lib. I. cap. xvii. p. 23.

ⁿ *Strab.* Lib. II. p. 503. A.

the world^o; so they judged him to be the disposer of our futurity: and therefore among other rites performed in *service* of the dead, holding up a chest with the *entrails* to the *sun*, they put up this prayer to him in the name of the deceased person: “ O lord, sun, and all
 “ ye gods that give life to mankind, accept of
 “ me, and recommend me as a companion to the
 “ eternal gods. For so long as I was in life,
 “ I constantly worshipped the gods whom my
 “ forefathers taught me; I always honoured my
 “ father and mother; I never committed mur-
 “ der; I never kept back a pledge; nor am I
 “ guilty of any other inexpressible crime: but if
 “ in any instance during my life, I have sinned
 “ in eating and drinking, the blame lyes not on
 “ me, but upon those; (pointing at the chest
 “ that holds the *entrails*.) And having thus
 “ prayed, they throw the chest into the river,
 “ and embalm the rest of the body, which
 “ they take to be pure. Thus they think it
 “ their duty to excuse themselves with god
 “ [the sun] for what they have done amiss in
 “ eating and drinking.” Homer makes Ulysses,
 when he warns his Companions not to touch
 the sacred cattle, to represent the sun as seeing
 and bearing all things.

— Τῶν δὲ βοῶν ἀπεχώμεθα, μή τι παθώμεν
 Δεινὸν γὰρ δεῖν αἶδε βόες, καὶ ἵφια μῆλα,
 Ἥελις, ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ' ἐπακῶει¹.

^o Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang.
 Lib. III. cap. iv.

P Porph. de Abst. Lib. IV. § 10:
¹ Odyss. μ. γ 321. Vid. Plin.

THE *Orphick* verses express the same doctrine, and declare the *righteousness* of the sun in this elegant manner :

Κλῦθι, μάκαρ, πανδερεὺς ἔχων αἰώνιον ὄμμα,
Τίλ' αὖ χρυσαυγὴς, ὑπερίων, ἐργάσιον Φῶς.

Ὅμμα δικαιοσύνης, ζωῆς Φῶς, ὃ ἐλάσσιαι,
Μάστιγι σὺν λιγυρῇ τετραγόρον ἄρμα διώκων.

So that people apprehending the *sun* to be *omniscient* and *righteous*, they imagined he would be highly offended at those who should trespass upon their duty, and in any instance offer him an indignity. Thus the *Persians* came to fancy, that people were punished with *leprosy* for sinning against the *sun*^r; whereas *Ulysses* suffered shipwreck and the loss of his companions, as *Tiresias* had before threatned.

BUT the supreme divinity of this heavenly body is pompously displayed by *Julian*, called the *Apostate*^t. In a set oration formed in honour of the *sun*, the emperor openly professes “ that from his younger years he had all along
“ entertained a particular veneration for this
“ deity. He fondly gives out his Lord, the
“ *sun*, as the common parent of mankind, who

Lib. II. cap. vi. Among the *Egyptians* the sun is called *Osiris*, i.e. *Mam-y'd*: Εἰκότως, say they; παντὶ γὰρ ἐπιβάλλου τὰς αἰτίνας, ὥσπερ ὀφθαλμοῖς ποδοῖς βλίπεν ἀπασαν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν. *Euseb. Præp. Evang.*
Lib. I. cap. ix.

^r *Herodot. in Clio*, c. cxxxviii.

^t *Gregory Nazianzen Orat.* 3. p. 59. and 61. inclines to think that *Julian* never was a convert to *Christianity*, but only made a shew of it. Which seems to be here made good by the *Emperor's* own confession.

generates

“ generates and nourishes our bodies; who sends
 “ down our souls, not only from himself, but from
 “ the other gods, and bestows upon us what good
 “ thing soever we enjoy, either immediately by
 “ himself, or by means of the other deities: and
 “ thus having acknowledged this great be-
 “ neficent God, in his divine power and go-
 “ vernment, he concludes with supplicating
 “ to him, not only for peace and safety here,
 “ but for joy and happiness hereafter.” And
Proclus a *Platonick* philosopher of good note,
 who flourished in the *fifth* century after the
 publication of the *gospel*, carries it full as far
 as the emperor. He too composed an *hymn* in
 honour of the *sun*, wherein he sets forth this
 heavenly body, as the author of light, life, and
 harmony; as the being who governs all things,
 who pardons sin, who enlightens the mind, who
 imparts to mankind all good things whatsoever
 and is infinitely powerful:

Κλῦθι, πρὸς νοεῖν βασιλεῦ, χρυσήνι τιλῶν,
 Κλῦθι, Φᾶς ταμία, ζωαρχέω ᾧ ἄνα πηγῆς
 Ἄψ' ἔχων κληίδα, ἢ ὑλαίοις ἐνὶ κόσμοις
 Ὑψόθεν ἀρμονίης ῥύμα πλάσιον ἐξοχέειν. κ.λ.λ.*

* *Jul. ad Regem Solem, Orat. 4.*

* *Procul. apud Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. Lib. V. cap. xxvi. p. 508. Vol. VIII. Vid. Mercur. Trismeg. Pæmandr. cap. xvi.*

Let it here be remarked, that as philosophers employed their reason in proving the heavenly bodies to be self-moving intelligent beings; so after the

same manner they likewise went about to prove, that they are fit objects of religious worship. I shall only instance in *Seneca*, who answers an objection on this head, which he supposes one to fetch from the necessity of their motions. The objection is this: *Sciam, inquit, solem ac lunam nobis velle pro-*

THESE

THESE were the sentiments of the ancients. And when we find that learned men and philosophers entertained such principles, we can have no reason to apprehend, that the *common Heathens* could conceive any the least suspicion of a God, superior to those heavenly bodies. In a word, did not *Apollonius* himself (who seems to have been mighty regular, very conscientious in his religious addresses to the sun*) travel as far as the *Indies*, there expecting to have better information about the gods than any where else; because the *people of those parts live near the gods, and the fountain of that warm substance that gives life to animals*! But

desse, si nolle potuerint: illis autem non licet non moveri: ad summam, consistant, & opus suum intermittant. To which Seneca answers: *Hoc vide quot modis repellatur. Non ideo minus vult, qui non potest nolle: imò magnum argumentum est firmæ voluntatis, ne mutare quidem posse. Vir bonus non potest non facere, quod facit: non enim erit bonus nisi fecerit. — Adjice nunc, quod non externa cogunt Deos, sed sua illis in legem æterna voluntas est: statuerunt quæ non mutarent. Itaque non possunt videri facturū aliquid, quamvis nolint: quia quiesquid desinere non possunt, perseverare voluerunt: nec unquam primi consilii Deos pœnitet. Sine dubio stare illis, & desciscere in contrarium non licet. Sed non ideo, quia vis sua illos in proposito tenet, ex imbecillitate permanent: sed quia non*

licet ab optimis aberrare, & sic ire decretum est. In prima autem illa constitutione, cum universa disponent, etiam nostra viderunt, rationemque hominis habuerunt. Itaque non possunt videri sua tantum causa decurrere, & explicare opus suum: quia pars operis sumus & nos. Debemus ergo & soli, & lunæ, & cæteris cælestibus beneficium. Quia etiam si potiora illis sunt, in quæ oriuntur; nos tamen in majora ituri juvant. Adjice, quod destinato juvant: ideoque obligati sumus, qui non in beneficium ignorantium incidimus; sed hæc quæ accipimus accepturos scierunt, &c. De Benefic. Lib. VI. cap. xx. — xxiii.

* *Philost. de Vit. Apoll. Lib. I. cap. xxxi. Lib. II. cap. xxxviii. Lib. VII. cap. x.*

† *Id. ibid. Lib. V. cap. xi.*

the

the *Indians* do not seem to have differed from other nations: only whilst they worshipped the *sun* at midday, they worshipped at midnight a *ray*, some artificial fire, *suspended in the air*².

FROM all which it appears to me, that the conjectures above laid down about the religion of men left wholly to themselves, are fully made good, and stand sufficiently confirmed from plain *matter of fact*, or from what has really happened every where in the world. So that I cannot but judge, that mankind without all foreign instruction, having no information from *God* or any *angel*, will look upon the *heavenly bodies* to be *animals*, and regard them as the *great objects of their religious worship*². And indeed, since the most penetrating philosophers

² *Id. ibid.* Lib. III. cap. xv. xxxiii. This conceit among the *Indians* puts me in mind of a piece of banter, which *Socrates* shrewdly levels at those people, who hold the *sun* to be that *righteous being* who by his *penetrating heat* governs and directs all things. When I talk with joy, says *Socrates*, of this doctrine to other people, as if I had heard something fine and excellent, I am laughed at, and they ask me, if I imagine there is not a *righteous thing* among men, when the *sun* is set. Plat. in *Cratyl.* p. 413. B.

² I have great pleasure in repeating these simple lines of a plain honest man, who was not without some learning, and who, having turned *Christian*, confesses the mistake he had formerly

been in, and would fain undeceive those people he had left, and bring them to share in the knowledge he had acquired:

De sole & luna, licet sint præ-
sentanea nobis,
Erratis, quod ego prius, pu-
tatis oranda.
Sunt quidem in Astris, sed non
sua sponte currunt.
Omnipotens illos, cum conderet
omnia primum,
Locavit ibidem cum stellis
quarta dierum.

— — —
Vos autem seducunt sacerdotes
pauci,
Numinis qui dicant aliquid
morituri prodesse.
Accedite, legite, & discite-
verum.

Octavian. Instruc. cap. viii.
were

were never able to overcome such prejudices; what can tempt us to imagine, that rude uncultivated man will get beyond them, and form a truer judgment of things?

As for these men finding out the *one, only living and true God*; how is it possible for them ever to arrive of themselves, to the knowledge of such a being? A company of human creatures without all assistance and improvement, left wholly to themselves, and to the impressions of sensible objects, will they be able in their rude unpolished state, to raise their thoughts above every thing they *see, hear, taste or smell*, so as to abstract entirely from all matter, and to form to themselves the notion of an *immense infinite mind*, every where present, possessed of all perfections, the creator, preserver, and governor of all things in heaven and in earth, who inspects the actions of mankind, will call us to an account of our conduct, and as we have done good or evil reward or punish us hereafter? They can form no notion of a *limited immaterial* being animating their bodies, that shall exist in a separate state to eternity; and will they conceive an *unlimited pure intelligent* mind or being, ever independent of all matter that necessarily exists, and is the first cause of all things?

“ There is nothing more difficult, *says Balbus*
“ *in Cicero*, than to withdraw the attention of
“ one’s mind from the things we are accus-
“ tomed to see. It is this difficulty that makes
“ the herd of mankind, and those philosophers
“ who resemble them, that they can form no
“ notion

“ notion of the immortal gods, without apprehending them in human shape^b. But to conceive of the gods, in this manner, *he observes*, is idle and absurd. We are *preposseſſed*, *says he*, with a notion, that this is the nature of God namely, that he is a living being, and that in the whole compass of nature, there is nothing more excellent.” Upon which one should think, that *Balbus* is in a hopeful way to lead us on to an infinite mind. But *observe the extent of human powers* in a learned philosopher: he only means to condemn the *Epicureans*, and the herd of mankind, for apprehending the gods in *human shape*. “ I see nothing, *continues Balbus*, that better suits the notion, with which we are preposseſſed, than that I judge, that *this very universe*, than which nothing can be more excellent, is a living being and God^c.” Is this the result of a philosopher’s *preconceptions*, or his innate ideas concerning a deity^d?

^b People having no better information than their own, imagine their gods, not only in *human shape*, but with *human passions*; each man according to his own temper. Vid. *Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. VII. p. 711. B.*

^c *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. cap. xvii.*

^d It is very certain that however the ancients talk of *preconceptions* or *innate ideas*, in the mind of man, relating to God; yet they never thereby mean, *there is an idea or notion of an infinite mind naturally impressed*

upon the human soul. It may be made appear from numberless instances, that those *preconceptions* or innate ideas they speak of, do only represent as gods either *this universe*, or the *luminaries of heaven*, or whatever other beings they happen to conceive under that character. Of all the philosophers the *Stoicks* seem to insist most upon *anticipations* or innate ideas, particularly in relation to the deity; and yet we see what sort of beings they are led to apprehend by those ideas. Nay the *Epicureans* themselves talk

Is

Is this all the height his apprehensions reach to, when the mind rises above familiar objects? What can we expect from these men, whom I suppose void of all instruction and improvement?

and argue in favour of *innate ideas*, that represent those very sort of gods whom they are pleased to confess. Thus *Velleius* openly declares: *Solus* (*Epicurus*) *vidit primum esse Deos, quod in omnium animis eorum notionem impressisset ipsa natura. Quæ est enim gens, aut quod genus hominum, quod non habeat sine doctrina anticipationem quandam deorum? Quam appellat Πρώτην Epicurus, id est, antereceptam animo rei quandam informationem, sine qua nec intelligi quidquam, nec quæri, nec disputari possit: cujus rationis vim atque utilitatem ex illo cælesti Epicuri de regula & judicio volumine accepimus. Quod igitur fundamentum hujus quæstionis est, id præclare jactum videtis: cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, maneatque ad unum omnium firma consensus, intelligi necesse est esse Deos, quoniam instas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus, &c. Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. cap. xvii, xviii.* In short, philosophers pretend that the common notions, even those that are given out by poets, about the rewards and punishments of a future state, are as much *innate*, or rather more than the ideas they have of the gods.

Now I would beg to be informed; if the idea of God be naturally stamped on human minds, how come mankind to mistake that idea so prodigiously? How come mankind at all to differ in their conceptions of a Deity? *Eusebius* (*in Præp. Evang. Lib. II. cap. v. p. 70. cap. vi. p. 72. D*) is of opinion, that mankind have natural or innate ideas of the essence and being of God. But at the same time he seems to alledge, “that people cannot apply those ideas to their proper object, without a just train of reasoning. Upon which he expressly reports, that only one, or two, or a very few more mentioned in the Jewish scriptures, reasoned justly in applying those notions, and from the visible world clearly discerned the great creator and governor. Whereas all the rest of mankind quite misapplied their natural pre-conceptions, and were thereby sunk into the deepest impiety; for that some, like brute creatures giving up themselves to sensual pleasures, *desisted* men of the most abandoned characters; whilst others being excited by their innate ideas, though they apprehended God to be a be-

THEY see the *sun*, the *moon*, &c. which they imagine great animated beings; they are sensible how much their good and prosperity depends upon their influence. Will they look beyond these, and go in quest of an *incomprehensible invisible mind*, upon whom they may more justly place their dependence; and from whom, with better reason, they may expect safety and happiness? I must again say, it is unimaginable to me, by what means mankind wholly in their own hands, as I have represented them, rude and uncultivated, and every day pressed by the necessary demands of life, can come to raise their perceptions above all objects of sense, and pursue a course of the most abstracted thoughts and reasoning, that will lead them to the discovery of an infinite mind, absolute in all perfections, who gives being and motion to sun, moon, and every thing else, and employs them as his servants and ministers in all things to ful-

“ing beneficent and good, and
 “endeavouring to find him out,
 “lifted up their minds to heaven, yet *there* they confined
 “their thoughts, and admiring the beauty of the heavenly bodies, took those to be
 “gods.” But *must a man reason with great exactness, before he can be able to perceive the real object of his innate ideas! Can a man mistake the sun, or the moon, or the stars for an infinite mind, the idea of whose being and perfection is supposed to be naturally engraven in the human soul!*

After all, ancient philosophers seem to think, that these ideas are not innate, or naturally imprinted in the soul of man; but that they are derived to us, as we grow up and become capable of observation, from the common events and occurrences of life, that may fill people's minds with the apprehensions of some invisible beings. Vid. *Sext. Emp. adv. Math. Lib. VIII. p. 319. E. p. 320. 321. 322. Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. cap. iv. v. Continuat. de Pens. divers. c. xxiv, xxv, xxvi.*

fil his pleasure. Upon any judgment I am able to form of what might have happened, from what has really happened in the world, I am strongly inclined to think that such an event, is, at least, next to an impossibility.

I MUST therefore freely own, I cannot help resting assured, that mankind left wholly to themselves, *having no supernatural revelation*, will not only apprehend the heavenly bodies as animals, but will confine their thoughts, their hopes, and fears, to those superior beings, upon whom, they judge from experience, they depend; and will have no notion, no suspicion of the existence of an invisible being, infinitely greater and more excellent, *who alone is over all, God blessed for ever*.

AND to understand whether this conclusion, which seems to stand to reason, can be justified by *fact*, and thereby be put beyond dispute, let the deists unite their endeavours, and mutually assist one another, in assembling together the whole race of mankind, that are in *this*, or that have been in *former* ages of the world, all over the face of the earth, wherever there is no supernatural revelation; and

As for the natural proof of the being of God taken from the works of creation and providence, Mr. Arnauld thinks it odd not to maintain, *it lies beyond the discovery of the mals of our species. Peut-on, says, he, dire que cette preuve ait esté à la portée de toutes sortes de Pa-*

yens, femmes, soldats, artisans, villageois sans education, & sans etude, & qu'elle ait esté à tous ces gens-là un secours suffisant pour avoir quelque connoissance de vrai Dieu qui a fait le ciel, & la terre? Second Denonciat. du Peché Philosoph. Art. 15. p. 125.

setting all mankind before them in this manner, let them pitch out the most distinguished characters; all the great men and philosophers, that are most likely to understand the nature and truth of things^f; and let them carefully question them about their notions of the *first cause* of all things; *whether* they have any knowledge, any apprehension of that God, whose being and perfections make the first and chief article of the *Jewish* and *Christian* faith? For my part, I shall endeavour with all the fairness and honesty I can, to explain the sentiments of those ancient philosophers, who appear to me to stand distinguished in the *Heathen* world. And I am apt to think, that in their opinions about a *first cause* and the *origin* of things, one may have a pretty good *essay* of the sufficiency of human powers, without foreign assistance, to discover the existence of the deity; and may fairly judge, whether the bulk of mankind in their notions of a God, can be thought capable of going beyond the reputed divinity of the heavenly bodies^g.

^f Le vrai moien de discerner l'evidence legitime d'avec la fausse, c'est d'avoir agi en homme qui cherche la verité sans pretendre l'avoir encore trouvée, & qui n'a choisi qu'après avoir discuté exactement & sans aucune partialité les raisons du pour & du contre jusqu'à la dernière réplique. Vous m'avouerez que les peuples ne font point cela sur la question de l'existence de Dieu.

Cont. de Pens. Divers, chap. xxi. p. 93.

^g Nec si philosophi doctrina literarum mirabiles extiterunt, ego etiam illis scientiam veri cognitionemque concesserim: quam nemo cogitando, aut disputando assequi potest. Neque ego nunc reprehendo eorum studium, qui veritatem scire voluerunt; quia naturam hominis Deus veri adipiscendi cupidissimam fecit:

S E C T. VI.

None of the ancient philosophers, in searching out and explaining the first cause and origin of things, ever were led to apprehend the being and perfections of the deity. And the bulk of mankind never entering into such speculations, they are out of the way of coming to such a conclusion.

BEFORE Socrates appeared, the study of learned men turned mostly upon *natural philosophy*; their great business was to enquire into natural causes, and particularly *what is the first cause of all things*^h. This, no doubt, is a most useful and delightful study: and one should think, that a philosopher can follow no better course, in order to arrive at the knowledge of an *infinite mind*, whose power, wisdom, and goodness, are every where so conspicuous all over the uni-

sed id arguo, id revinco, quod honestam illorum & optimam voluntatem non sit secutus effectus; quia neque quid esset verum ipsum sciebant, neque quomodo, aut ubi, aut qua mente quzerendum. Ita dum succurrere humanis erroribus cupiunt; ipsi se in plagas, & errores maximos induxerunt. — Quare non est, quod philosophis tan-

tum honoris habeamus; aut eorum eloquentiam pertimescamus. Loqui enim bene poterunt, ut homines eruditi; vere autem loqui nullo modo, quia veritatem non didicerant ab eo, qui ejus potens esset. Lact. Inst. Lib. III. cap. i.

^h Cic. Tuscul. Lib. V. cap. iv.

verse. But what success the ancients had in their enquiries of this nature, we shall see immediately.

THOSE philosophers who made it their main business to examine into the causes of things, differed widely from one another, and were far from being agreed in explaining *how this universe came to have an existence*. Most of those who first handled this argument, were of opinion, that *matter* is the *first* principle or cause of all things: “For, *say they*, that out of
“ which all things are first formed, and into
“ which all things are again resolved, since in
“ its substance it still remains, and only changes its qualities or affections, is certainly the
“ first cause of all thingsⁱ.” Thus it happened that *Anaximander*, a scholar of *Thales*, without mentioning, or having in view any particular sort of matter whatsoever, gave out *infinity*, or an infinite thing, which, *Plutarch* says, is undoubtedly *matter*, as the only element, principle, or cause of all things. And in his opinion, “when a world happens to rise out
“ of this infinite matter, however it may enjoy a long duration, yet it is not eternal:
“ for it again returns to its first cause or element, and innumerable worlds have, at long
“ intervals, thus succeeded to one another^k.”

BUT among other philosopher, this first cause or principle was given out to be *this* or *that* particular sort of matter, as each one chanced

ⁱ *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iii.*
p. 842. C. Vol. 2.

^k *Plat. de Placit. Philosoph.*
Lib. I. cap. iii. F.

to have different notions about the origin and formation of the world. And how very arbitrary and *whimsical* the ancients were, in assigning the *first* principle or cause of the universe, one may judge from the account that *Sextus Empiricus* gives us of the different opinions of a great many philosophers; among whom only *Anaxagoras* had the notion of an *infinite mind*, as some way concerned in the formation of the world¹. But I shall endeavour to explain things particularly.

IT should seem, that the most ancient opinion that prevailed among those who held a particular sort of matter, as the first principle of the universe, gave it in favour of *earth*. But later philosophers considering the grossness of the parts of that element, thought fit to drop it, and to set up for *one* or *more* of the other *three* elements^m. Thus *Thales* observing, “ that
 “ all animals have a *moist* or *watry* original;
 “ that all plants and vegetables are nourished
 “ by moisture, without which they wither and
 “ die; and imagining that the sun, and stars,
 “ and the universe itself, are sustained by watery
 “ exhalations, he apprehended, that *water* is
 “ the first cause of all thingsⁿ.” Nay some people give out that this was the opinion of men of most ancient times, who first began to treat of divine matters; for they represented *Ocea-*

¹ *Sext. Emp. Pyr. Hypot.* p. 850. B.

Lib. III. cap. iv. p. 115.

ⁿ *Id. ibid.* cap. iii. p. 842. E.

^m *Arist. Metaph.* Lib. I. cap. vii. *Plus.* ubi sup. E.

nus and *Tethys* as the authors of generation^o; and made *water*, which the poets call *Styx*, the

° *Sextus Empiricus* understands by *Oceanus* and *Tethys*, *water* and *earth*. But in the common opinion taken from the *Poets*, and which I see no reason to reject, *Tethys* is wife to *Oceanus* or *Neptune*. By this however, we are not to imagine that *Oceanus* and *Tethys* express two distinct and different beings: they both of them signify *water*, one single cause or principle. The matter is, the ancient heathens were wont to represent their gods, especially that which they took for the first cause or principle of the universe, as having the nature of an *Hermaphrodite*, or as being *male* or *female* together, calling them therefore *Ἀρσενόθηκες*; whereby they meant to declare the fruitful or prolific nature of those particular beings; as *Damascius* the philosopher expressly intimates, when, speaking of the first principle, he tells us, that the *Orphick* theology *ἄρσενόθηκεν αὐτὸν ὑπερῆσαντο, πρὸς ἐνδειξὴν ὅτι πάντων γεννητικὸς ὁσίας*. Thus in the *Orphick* verses mentioned by the author *De Mundo* in *Aristotle*, *Jupiter*, i. e. the *æther* or *air*, esteemed the first principle or cause of the universe, from which all things take their rise, is called a *man*, and an *immortal maid*.

— Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντων τέλειαι
Ζεὺς ἄρσεν γένετο, Ζεὺς ἄμ-
ροστοῖτο ἔκλειτο ὑμῶν.

Οἱ μὲν δ' αἴετα διφύα, ἀρσενό-
θηκεν, ἢ Διὶ λείπον. *Athenag.*
pro Christian. cap. xviii. p. 83.
To the same purpose *Valerius*
Soranus, an ancient poet, as it
is reported by *Varro*, expresses
himself thus:

Jupiter omnipotens, regum rex
ipse deumque,
Progenitor genetrixque deum,
Deus unu. Et omnis.

The *Pythagorean Monad*, supposed to be the spring and original of all things, is likewise given out as *male* and *female*. And *Jarchas* the head of the *Indian Brachman*, teaches *Apolonius*, that the world, from whence all things proceed, is an animal *male* and *female*.

So that *water*, when held to be the first cause or principle of the world, being set forth as *μυλογατὺς* or *ἄρσενόθηκεν*, *male* and *female* together; the poets take their liberty, and represent it under two different names, *Oceanus* and *Tethys*, which express a *male* and a *female*.

Ὠκεανὸς τε θιὼν γένετον ἔ-
μνησεν Τηθύ.

I shall only further observe, that this conceit of apprehending in this manner, the first cause of all things, was adopted by some *christians* and applied to God himself. Thus the learned and good bishop *Synesius*, (so much regarded for his piety and learning, that he
oath

oath of the gods, whereby it is set forth as a being more ancient and honourable.

BUT *Anaxamemes* and *Diogenes Apolloniates* were of opinion, "that *air* is the principle or
" first cause of all things; that from hence,
" *earth, water, and fire* are generated; and
" that these give birth to all other things. Nor
" in their apprehension, is the soul of man
" any more but than a portion of air. It is air,
" *they say*, which alone constitutes and pre-
" serves all beings; and the whole world is in-
" vested with *spirit* and *air*, that are words
" with them precisely of the same import."

AND as for *fire*, the other element; “to
“ this *Heraclitus* and *Hippalus* the *Metaponti-*
“ *nian* assign the original of the universe. For
“ they profess that all things come from fire,
“ and in fire all things are again resolved. And
“ in explaining the formation of things, they
“ tell us it proceeds after this manner; when
“ fire, *say they*, is extinguished, then the
“ world comes to be formed; for first, the
“ grosser parts of *fire* uniting together produce
“ *earth*; then earth being softened by the na-

was ordained *Bishop*, notwithstanding he openly professed he could not believe the *resurrection* of the body; about which however he came afterwards to be better informed) addressing himself to *God Almighty*, does not scruple to say in his *second hymn*:

Σὺ πατὴρ, σὺ δ' ἰσὶ μάτῃ,
Σὺ δ' ἄρῃ, σὺ δ' ἐν θᾶλῃ.

Vid. *Sext. Emp. adv. M*
Lib. VIII. p. 432. Fabric. Bib-
lioth. Gr. Antiq. cap. viii. § 7. p.
234. Macrob. in somn. Scip.
Lib. I. cap. vi. p. 18. Philost.
de vit. Apoll. Lib. III. cap. xxiv.
p Arist. ubi supra.

⁹ *Id. ibid.* p. 843. *De Anima*, Lib. I. cap. ii. p. 620. D. *Plut. de Placis. Philos.* Lib. I. cap. iii. p. 876. A.

ture

“ ture of fire, and growing lax, brings forth
 “ *water*; and water rarified and exhaled ge-
 “ nerates *air*. And again the world and all
 “ bodies shall be dissolved by fire in an universal
 “ conflagration. So that *fire is the original,*
 “ *and the last resort of all things.* And by
 “ fire worlds rise and fall in a continued suc-
 “ cession.”

ALL these philosophers contented themselves with *one* first cause or principle, which, by having some of its parts condensed and others rarified in such a certain manner, they judged sufficient to the production of all things¹.

BUT *Empedocles* seems to apprehend, that one single cause is not sufficient: and therefore to these three causes, *water, air, and fire*, severally assigned, as I have just now observed, by other philosophers, he adds *earth*; and is pleased to give them out all *four*, as the first causes of all things: and in his opinion these *four* elements, in themselves fixed and permanent, do by their composition and disjunction, give rise to all the various beings in the universe².

IT is now to be remarked, that none of those philosophers, who maintain only one first cause of all things, had any notion of an *efficient cause* of any sort; by whose influence or agency matter was put in motion, and formed into this variety of sensible beings. It is in-

¹ *Id. ibid.* p. 877. C.

Vol. I.

² *Arist. de Generat. & Corrupt.*
 Lib. II. cap. iii. p. 516. C.

¹ *Id. Metaph.* Lib. I. cap. iii.
 p. 843. A. Vol. II.

deed so extravagantly absurd to imagine, that *matter* in any shape, is the *sole, absolute, first* cause of all things, that one should think it altogether incredible, that such an opinion was ever conceived or held by men of common sense: but thus it stands in fact. And it

* The famous Mr. Bayle found the account so odd which the heathen give about the origin of *Jupiter*, that for a long time the more he thought on it, the more monstrous it appeared to him; and in short of such a nature, that he judged it impossible for the philosophers to have espoused it. But coming afterwards to apprehend, they might slide into this error, by I know not, says he, what course of reasoning, whereof it was not easy for them to discover the weakness, he explains himself after this manner:

Jupiter le plus grand des Dieux, Saturne son pere, le Ciel son grand-pere, l'Ether son bis-aieul, & tout ce qu'il vous plaira de nommer en montant plus haut, étoit un etre particulier, qui devoit son origine, sa naissance, son existence, à la matiere éternelle & incréée, principe de toutes choses, cahos selon Hesiodé, eau selon Thales, air selon Anaximenes. Mais, dira-t-on, Thales n'avoit-il pas que les Dieux conoissent jusqu'aux pensées des hommes? Qu' fait cela? répondrai-je: on en peut seulement conclure qu'il donnoit une connoissance forte vaste à quelques-uns des êtres que l'eau avoit engendrez, & que l'on nommoit,

Jupiter, Junon, Venus, Neptune, &c. Notez qu' Homere, qui decrit si pompeusement le pouvoir des Dieux, les fait tous naitre de l'ocean:

Ὠκεανὸν τε θεῶν γένεσσι καὶ πατρὶός τε Τηθύς

La grande, & la prodigieuse absurdité de ces hypotheses, est de dire que les Dieux, ornés d'une grand science, aient été formés d'un principe qui ne connoit rien; car ni le Cahos, ni l'Air, ni la Mer, ne sont pas des êtres pensans. Comment donc peuvent-ils avoir été la cause totale de ces natures divines, qui dans les systèmes des poètes & des plus anciens physiciens savoi-ent tant de choses? Mais quelque fausses & insensées que puissent être ces hypotheses, je ne m'étonne plus, comme je faisois, qu'elles aient pu être admises par des philosophes. La plupart d'entre eux suposoient que l'ame de l'homme est corporelle. Ils croioient donc qu'elle se formoit des parties les plus subtiles du sang, ou de la semence. Or des qu'on a fait ce pas, on va bien loin en peu de tems. Mettez à part l'expérience, consultez seulement les idées de la théorie, il ne paroît pas plus aisé qu'une matiere reçue dans l'utérus se convertisse

should

should seem that these philosophers having a conceit, that they understood well enough the formation of things, when they imagined they took their rise from *infinite matter*, from *water*, *air*, or *fire*, they gave themselves no trouble about inquiring into the *cause or author of motion*. As *Aristotle* observes, this would have been the supposing another cause, which their scheme of deriving all things from one cause, could not admit of^x. So that the enquiries of such philosophers were far from leading them to apprehend the being and perfections of the deity. “ Each man upon his own *Hypothesis*, “ as *Socrates* remarks, comes to fancy that he “ has found out an *Atlas*, which is stronger “ than *any other*, more immortal, and more “ capable to sustain and comprehend the universe. By which means they esteem *that* “ which alone is good and fit to unite and sup-

en un enfant, qui à force de manger & de boire devient un homme d'un grand esprit, qu'il paroît aisé qu'un enfant naisse d'un arbre. Dès là un païen trouve possible, qu'au commencement les hommes soient nez, ou du limon de la terre, ou de quelque liqueur tombée du ciel. Des que cela semble possible, on passe aisément à croire ce que les poëtes debitoient de naissance de *Venus*. On ne trouve, plus étrange que par la fermentation qui debrouilla le chaos, ou qui forma divers degrés de rarefaction & de condensation dans l'étendue infinie, les étoiles aient commencé d'exister au firmament, & les Dieux au ciel, comme les plantes

& les animaux sur le globe de la terre. L'opinion commune des païens sur la nature divine ne mettoit qu'une différence du plus au moins entre les Dieux & les hommes. Or en conséquence de cela, rien n'empêchoit que l'on ne s'imaginât que les parties de la matière, qui s'étoient le plus finement subtilisées, avoient composé des Dieux, puis que celles qui étoient demeurées massives & crasses, & qui comme la lie & le sédiment du tout avoient composé la terre, ne laissoient pas de se convertir en hommes, &c. Bayl. Dict. in Jupiter, Rem. G.

^x *Arist.* ubi supra.

“ port

“port the world, to be really nothing^y.” They talk indeed of gods: but their first, their chief and supreme God, can be no other then *that* which they conjecture is the first cause and principle of all things. It is true, *Anaximander* does not give out his *infinite matter* to be God; he only conceives, that *every world* that rises out of it, is God: so that his gods are by turns produced and extinguished, and succeed one another at long intervals^z. Those however who assign the original and formation of all things to *water*, are of opinion, that water is the *parent* of the gods^a: while others who assign it to *air*, pronounce this principle the *supreme* God^b: and a third sort, who set up for *fire*, bestow the *chief* divinity upon this principle^c. At which rate, every different philosopher comes to have a different supreme God of his own, according to the different notion he happens to conceive about the origin and formation of the universe. Mean while, *Empedocles* apprehending that *four* principles or causes are concerned in the formation of the world, he gives out *all the four* as so many gods^d.

THUS it happened to those ancient philosophers: and we see, they were at an infinite distance from having any the least knowledge of

^y Plat. in *Phæd.* p. 99. B. Vol. I. Gent. p. 42. C. Vid. *D. Laert.* in *Heraclit.* p. 238. E. *Arist.*

^z Cic. de *Nat. Deor.* Lib. I. de *Partib. Animal.* Lib. I. cap. x. v. p. 975. B. Vol. I.

^a *Homer. Iliad.* ξ. γ 302.

^b Cic. ubi supra.

^c *Clem. Alexandr. Admon. ad*

^d Cic. de *Nat. Deor.* Lib. I. cap. xii.

our God. Nor have we reason to think, they would have made the discovery, had they attended to this obvious question, *how came matter at first to be put in motion?* The question indeed is so very obvious, that it is pretty odd how it came to escape them. This is an easy reflection taken notice of by *Aristotle*, *a piece of brass will not move itself, and form a statue^e*: and will matter begin motion and rear up an universe? But I say, had those philosophers attended to this question about the origin of motion, there is good reason to think, they would nevertheless have remained quite ignorant of an infinite mind. Certain it is, that those ancient philosophers, who seem to have been sensible, that it is necessary to examine into the cause and origin of motion, in explaining the formation of the world; were so far from being thereby led to apprehend a *first mover*, *an intelligent mind*, *infinite in all perfections*, that it only served them to heighten their absurdities, and in another manner to expose the weakness of human nature.

AMONG us indeed, he would be counted a most contemptible philosopher, who in considering the structure and motion of the material world, does not come to perceive the necessary existence of a first mover, of infinite perfection, altogether distinct from matter^f.

^e *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iii. p. 843. C. Vol. II.*

^f *Systematis mundani compagem elegantissimam ita tan-*

dem patefecit (Newtonus,) & penitus perspectandam dedit, ut nec ipse, si nunc revivisceret, Rex Alphonsus, vel simpli-

But

But if it should seem, that some of those philosophers found it so impossible, in any way that could stand to reason, to account for the origin of motion, that, to prevent all difficulties in the matter, they took a short cutt, and absolutely denied all motion whatsoever: this, it may be thought, is a bold stroke; but it saves all questions about matter's beginning motion, that are perplexing and cannot well be answered. So that they represented this world as one compleat being, eternal, immutable, and void of all motion in any respect whatsoever^b. And as for those motions, which we fancy we see, in the generation and corruption, the changes and vicissitude of things, they are only, they say, *bare appearances*, that have nothing in them of reality. Thus the matter was given out by *Xenophanes, Parmenides, Melissus, Zeno Eleates*; and others. And,

WHAT stronger proof can we have; that human nature left to itself is in no sort capable of discovering the existence of an infinite mind? One should think, that those men, who had so much ingenuity and delicacy of wit, as to invent, besides other arguments against mo-

citatem, vel harmoniæ gratiam in ea desideraret. Itaque naturæ majestatem propius jam licet intueri, & dulcissima contemplatione frui: conditorem vero ac dominum universorum impensius colere & venerari; qui fructus est philosophiæ uberimus. Cæcum esse oportet, qui ex optimis & sapientissimis

rerum structuris non statim videat fabricatoris omnipotentis infinitam sapientiam & bonitatem: insanum, qui profiteri nolit. *Cotes in Præf. ad Newt. Princip.*

^g *Sext. Emp. Pyrrh. Hypot. Lib. III. cap. vii, viii. &c.*
^h *Arist. ubi supra.*

tionⁱ

tionⁱ. The argument called *Achilles*, in answer to which whole treatises have been written, might have well been able to have found out a first mover *distinct* from matter; which would have saved them the absurdities they fell into, and appeared to them infinitely juster and more reasonable. And strange it is, that instead of falling upon the thought of a *first intelligent mover*, which now is judged so obvious, the mind of man should be so reduced as to deny motion altogether! But as I have just now hinted, the knowledge of such a being seems to lie beyond human discovery. They do not indeed deny there is a God: no, like other philosophers, they take what they apprehend is most considerable in their views of the universe, and *this* they set up as their *chief* and supreme deity. Hence it is that among these philosophers, the *world*, or this complexion of things, which they conceive as one being, is called the *one, eternal, supreme, immutable God*, of a *spherical figure*^k.

THUS one set of philosophers, not being able of themselves to find out a first mover, in which their minds could rest satisfied; and observing nothing but absurdity in the sentiments of others upon this article; since there can be no motion without a first mover, and as I have said, they are not able to conceive any such being; they are glad to deny all motion

ⁱ *Id. Physic. Lib. VI. cap. xiv. Lib. I. cap. xxxiii. p. 46. C. P. 395. Vol. I. Cic. Acad. Lib. II. cap. xxxvii.*
^k *Sext. Emp. Pyr. Hypot.*

whatsoever, and seem to apprehend, that this argument is far more defensible, than any particular opinion they had yet heard, or could imagine, concerning the first cause or author of motion¹.

¹ To alledge there is any difficulty in apprehending, how motion is begun or continued, may seem strange to those who are not accustomed to such speculations. But so great, certainly, is the difficulty, that one may call it unconquerable. *Quomodo vero*, says Mr. *S' Gravesande*, *cum motus sit continua loci mutatio, mutatio secundi momenti ex mutatione primi momenti sequatur; Et quænam sit causa continuationis motus, mihi omnino ignotum videtur: cum autem phenomenon certum sit, pro naturæ lege habendum est.* Elem. Phys. Lib. I. § 124. And had not Dr. *Keill* had otherwise access to be persuaded of the being of God, I am apt to think that the impossibility of explaining this difficulty would not have immediately brought him to make this profession: *Definant*, says he, *jam philosophi continuati motus exquirere causam; alia quippe agnoscenda est nulla, præter primam illam, quæ non modo motum, sed res omnes in esse suo conservat, Deum scil. Optimum Maximum.* Introd. Phys. Lect. XI. p. 122.

But however our modern philosophers may agree in confessing God to be the first cause of motion; yet they seem to differ in conceiving, when it is

that God immediately acts or interposes. *The Guardian* N^o. 126. (which I here chuse to quote, because of the beautiful moral reflections one meets with in that paper) is of opinion, that *the mutual gravitation of bodies, cannot be explained any other way; than by resolving it into the immediate operation of God.* Thus likewise Dr. *Pitcairn* (in *Epist. Archimed. ad Gelon.*) delivers himself upon the same subject: *Quoties*, says he, *de illa vi Gravitatis, supra qua nonnulla habes a me demonstrata, meditor; nullas, quæ vim istam corporibus natura inertibus indiderint, corporeas causas invenio. Quapropter Et hanc ad divinam Et cuncta moventem vim, vulgo quidem ignotam, lubens refero.* Dr. *Clarke* does not expressly affirm thus much, but he reports that gravitation or attraction in all instances must necessarily be the effect of some immaterial cause. *Vid. Rohault. Phys. Part. I. cap. ii. p. 51. Adnot. N^o. 6. and Part. II. cap. xxviii. p. 333. adnot.* But Sir *Isaac Newton* makes it a question, whether it may not immediately arise from the elastic force of æther. *Opt. B. 2. Qu. 21.* And Mr. *Derham* contents himself with this declaration: "I will not, says he, venture

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BUT

BUT other philosophers, in considering this article, judged it fitting to follow another course: they do not deny there is motion; but they admit several causes or principles in the formation of the universe, and ascribe the agency or the power of motion, either to one of those principles, or, as I apprehend, to some qualities or affections which, they seem to conjecture, are naturally inherent to them. Thus *Parmenides* (talking of things not as he conceived them in themselves, but as they appear to us^m) represents *fire* and *earth*, as the two principles and only causes that are concerned in the formation of the world; he attributes the agency to fire, and makes the earth only *passive*; and at the same time pronounces each of these

“ to say how it comes to pass
 “ that bodies act at such im-
 “ mense distances upon one an-
 “ other; but chuse rather to
 “ acquiesce in adoring the wis-
 “ dom and power of the great
 “ author of all things, who hath
 “ inspirited the materials of
 “ which the world consists, with
 “ such an active quality, as
 “ serves not only to preserve
 “ the globes themselves entire,
 “ but to enable them to re-
 “ volve about their luminous
 “ centre (from whence they
 “ have their light and heat) in
 “ orbs that are most commo-
 “ dious, and also fixt and per-
 “ manent ” *Astro-Theol.* B. VI.
 chap. iii. p. 115. Vid. *Physico-*
Theol. B. I. chap. v. So that one,
 perhaps, needs not greatly won-
 der, that ancient philosophers,

destitute of revelation, did some
 of them deny motion altogether,
 whilst others maintained it to
 be eternal. And says Lord *Ke-*
rulam: Intellectus humanus in
iis quæ semel placuerunt, (aut
quia recepta sunt & credita, aut
quia delectant,) alia etiam omnia
trahit ad suffragationem, & con-
sensum cum illis: & licet ma-
ior sit instantiarum vis & copia,
quæ occurrunt in contrarium; ta-
men eas aut non observat, aut
contemnit, aut distinguendo sum-
movet & rejicit, non sine magna
& pernicioso præjudicio, quo prio-
ribus illis syllepsibus auctoritas
maneant inviolata. Nov. Organ.
 Lib. I. Aphor. 46.

^m Vid. *Fabric. Biblioth. Græc.*
 Lib. II. cap. xxiii. p. 799.
 Vol. I.

principles

principles a Godⁿ. The opinion of the *Stoicks*, as I shall have occasion to observe afterwards, does not seem to be different: and I violently suspect that *Pythagoras*, as the reader will judge by and by, had at best no other sentiments.

BUT *Parmenides* liking to vary his conjectures concerning the formation of things, as they appear to our senses, did not confine himself to the agency of fire, but, as *Aristotle* seems to understand it^o, made *love* likewise the efficient cause. This, as *Aristotle* further observes, was also *Hesiod's* opinion; who gives out *chaos* to have been first; then *earth*; and after *earth* came *love*, who stands distinguished among the immortal gods. So that, according to *Aristotle*, these learned men, *Hesiod* and *Parmenides*, represented *love* as the first cause and author of motion, whereby things being united and brought together, this mighty fabrick of the universe was beautifully composed and erected.

HOWEVER *Empedocles* reflecting, there is in the world *evil* as well as *good*, *deformity* as well as *beauty*, *confusion* as well as *order*, introduces two different causes of motion, *viz. concord* and *discord*^e; which, by their agency in uniting and disjoining the four elements, are in his opinion the efficient causes of all things in the universe.

AFTER this manner, these philosophers accounted for the origin of motion.

^o *Clem. Alex. Adm. ad Gent.* iv. p. 844. Vol. II. p. 42. C.

^e *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap.*

THERE is no difficulty in apprehending, that the making *fire* the first cause and author of motion, betrays an absolute ignorance of that *infinite mind*, whom we confess the great former of the world. But, perhaps, some people may imagine, that the giving out *love*, or, as others do, *concord* and *discord*, as the efficient causes of things, plainly enough signifies, either the agency of one beneficent mind, or of two different minds, whereof one is *good*, and the other *evil*, that must have existed before the formation of the universe. And indeed *love*, *concord*, and *discord*, do most frequently signify the affections of an active intelligent mind; but at the same time, they likewise express some particular qualities inherent to bodies, whereby, (to speak after the same manner) they *affect* or *disaffect* one another, or whereby they unite, or keep separate, or fly asunder, and, as it is common in every language to express the natural influences of material beings one upon another, by words properly signifying the affections or passions of a mind; so, it is plain to me, that those philosophers, who assign either *love*, or *concord* and *discord*, as the first causes of motion, do thereby only mean some particular affections or qualities of bodies in relation to one another.

It was the real opinion of *Parmenides*, that this world, as it now stands, was from eternity, is in itself immutable, and that it is God. And hereby indeed he cuts off at once all questions concerning a first mover, and gives us plainly

ly to understand, what is his fixed notion of God. But this philosopher, taking things in the common light, and talking of them as they appear to our senses, supposes motion in the world; and going about to account for its origin, he pronounces *fire* the author thereof, which he likewise calls God. And therefore as yet we have good reason to rest assured, that *Parmenides* was far from apprehending an infinite mind as the first mover, or the first cause and author of motion.

Now when the same philosopher (still pretending to account, not for the real cause of real effects, but only the seeming cause of seeming effects) is pleased at other times to profess, that *love* is the author of motion, can we imagine, that in such views, wherein he talks only of *appearances*, he thereby understands an affection of an infinite mind, to whose power the origin of motion must ultimately be ascribed? Not the least ground of suspicion is there, that ever any such thought entered into his mind. *Aristotle* has no notion of his thinking so: he represents *Parmenides* of the same opinion with *Hesiod*; and *Hesiod* affirms that *chaos* was first;

⁹*Sextus Empiricus* understands it, as if *chaos* came first into being. "But the man, he says, who maintains this, ruins his own *hypothesis*; for ask the question, What brought *chaos* into being? — he shall not be able to answer you." — From which one may learn, that this philosopher had no

sort of suspicion, that *Hesiod* had any the least notion of a being superior to *chaos*, to which *chaos* owes its existence, or by whose power it was first put in motion. Mean while, it was, they say, his passion to get a solution of this difficulty, that engaged *Epicurus* to apply himself to the study of philo-

then

then *earth*; and next to that, *love*. From which it appears, that they began to account for the origin of motion, not from *earth's* rising out of *chaos*, which yet could not happen without motion; but from the time that things began to come from *earth*. And as, in this scheme, earth is set forth as the original or fountain, from whence all other things are derived, and is therefore among philosophers esteemed the *ancientest* of the gods; (for *chaos* is set aside, either as a senseless *jumble* of things, or as only signifying bare *space*, wherein things have their existence¹⁾) so they make *love*, which they conceive posterior to *earth*, to be the active principle that puts earth in motion, and thereby comes to form it in particular beings.

By *love* therefore, they cannot possibly understand an infinite mind, or any particular affection of such a being. *Hesiod's* own account of things does not in the least point at any thing of this nature. In his address to the *Muses* he declares his design:

Ἐπαλῆ δ' ὡς ταπρῶτα θεοὶ καὶ γαῖα γέγοντο,
καὶ ποταμοὶ, καὶ πάντ' ἀπείριτ' οἰδματι
θύων,

Ἄσπερ τε λαμπετόωντα, καὶ ἔρως εὐρύς ὑπερ-
θεν,

οἱ τ' ἐκ τ' ἐγένοντο θεοὶ δατήρες ἰσίων.

Ταῦτά μοι ἔαπετε, μῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι,

Ἐξ ἀρχῆς καὶ εἰπαθ' ὅ, τι πρῶτον γένετ' αὐτῶν.

sophy. *Sext. Emp. adv. Math.*
Lib. IX. p. 383. C.

Arist. Phys. Lib. IV. cap. ii.
p. 352. Vol. I.

AND

AND thus he begins his wonderful tale :

Ἦτοι μὲν πρώτητα χάος γένητ', αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
 Γαῖ' ευρύστερνον, πάντων ἐδ' ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
 Ἀθανάτων, οἱ ἔχουσι κάρη νιφόεντα Ὀλύμπῳ,
 Τάρταρά τ' ἠερόεντα μυχῶ χθονὸς ευρυοδείης,
 Ἦδ' Ἔρ', ὅς κ' ἀλλιστ' ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,
 Λυσιμελής πάντων τε θεῶν, πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων,
 Δάμνα) ἐν στήθεσσι νόον, καὶ ἐπίφρονα βελήν.
 Ἐκ χάος δ' ἑρέβος τε μέλαινα τε νύξ ἐγένοντο.
 Νυκτὸς δ' αὐτ' αἰθήρ τε καὶ ἡμέρη ἐξεγένοντο,
 Οὓς τέκε κυοσαμένη ἐρέβει φιλότῃ μιγῆσα.
 Γαῖα δέ τοι πρῶτον μὲν ἐγένετο ἴσον ἑαυτῇ,
 Ουρανὸν ἀστερόεντα, ἵνα μὲν περὶ πάντα καλύπτῃ,
 Ὅφρ' εἴη μακάρεσσι θεοῖς ἐδ' ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ.
 Γεῖνατο δ' ἔρεα μακρὰ κ. λ.

THEOGON, ὧ 108^f.

I AM inclined to think, that *Hesiod* and *Par-*
menides had much the same notion of *love*, that
Aristophanes has formed of it, who tells us,
 " that *night* and *chaos* were first; that *night*
 " brought forth an *egg* in the wide bosom of
 " *chaos*; and that from this *egg*, in a due course
 " of time, was produced *love*, which mingling
 " again with *chaos*, gave birth to all other be-
 " ings, to *men*, and the *immortal gods*".

Χάος ἦν, καὶ νύξ, ἑρέβος τε μέλαν πρῶτον, καὶ
 τάρταρος ευρύς.

Γῆ δ', καὶ αἴθήρ, καὶ ἕρανός ἦν ἑρέβος δ' ἐν ἀπεί-
 ροσι κόλποις

† Upon this doctrine taught *Hesiod* says he, καὶ δὲ ὅτως ἐδήλωσεν ὑπὸ
 by *Hesiod*, *Theophilus* makes τὸν ἰγνώσκειν, ἢ ἡδ' ἐν πρώτοις
 this remark. Καὶ ταῦτα ἰσχυρῶς, ἢ χάος, καὶ ὕλη τις προϋπί-
 τικται

Τίκτει πρώτιστον ὑπ' ἀνέμιον γυῖξ ἢ μελανόπτερ-
ων.

Ἐξ δ' περ αὖτε λομέλαις ὥραις, ἔβλασεν Ἐρως ὁ
παθεινός,

Στίλβων νῶτον πλερύγων χρυσᾶιν, εἰκὼς ἀνεμάκεσι
δίταις.

Οὐτ' ὃ χάει πλερόεντι μίγεις νυχίῳ κατὰ τάρ-
ταρον εὐρύν,

Ἐνεόπλευσε γέν' ἡμέτερον, καὶ παῶτον ἀνήγαγεν
ἐς Φῶς.

Πρότερον δ' ἔκ' ἦν γέν' ἀθανάτων, πρὶν Ἐρως συν-
έμιξεν ἅπαντα.

Aves p. 573. F.

WHEREIN, I should think, *Aristophanes* is infinitely far from having any notion of that being, whom *Moses* gives out to be the great author of the universe, and who in the *Christian* institution is called (ἀγάπη) *love*. It appears to me, that these philosophers, when they introduce *love* as an active principle, do only mean by it, some *attractive* qualities naturally diffused in *matter* or earth, whereby, things of a *similar* nature uniting together, this universe comes to be formed. And herein *Joannes Diaconus* seems to justify me, when he explains it thus: "By
" love here, *says he*, we must understand, not
" the son of *Venus*; (for how can he be meant,
" while his mother hath as yet no existence?)
" but another more ancient love, which I take
" to be a *moving* cause or principle naturally

καὶ το αὐτὸν ὅσα τις ἄρα Ad Autol. Lib. II. p. 62.
ἢ ὁ ταύτην μετασκεινάζων; κ. λ.

dissemi-

“ disseminated in every thing.” In short, that excellent philosopher *Phocylides* expressly tells us, that “ love is not a God, but an occult quality “ or affection, that is naturally inherent, *we* “ may well say, in all things:”

‘Ου γὰρ Ἔρως θεός ἐστι, πᾶσι δ’ αἰδηλον ἀπάντων’.

NAY *Sanckoniathon*, who flourished before the Trojan war, is much older than any Greek poet or philosopher: and from the account he gives us of the sentiments of the *Phœnicians*, as related by *Eusebius*, concerning the formation of the universe, it seems pretty manifest, that love must certainly signify some attractive powers whereby the parts of matter in a chaos do naturally unite and combine together: for he tells us, that the dark blowing air affecting its own principles, there happened a complexure, which is called love, and is the beginning of the formation of the universe².

Nor can one judge otherwise of *Empedocles's* concord and discord. His (φιλία) concord can be no more then *Parmenides's* (ἔρως) love, to which he added (νεῖκη) discord, in order to account the best he could, for the different phenomena in nature. And in his opinion, as

¹ See *Cudw. Intell. Syst.* c. iv. p. 212.

² *Phocyl.* γ clxxxii. It is here of little consequence, whether *Phocylides* was really the author of this elegant poem: only I apprehend, there is no good reason to judge otherwise; and I incline to think, that *Socra-*

tes had this very poem in his eye, when he commends *Phocylides* as extremely fit to instruct people in the conduct of life. Vid. *Fabr. Bibl. Græc.* Lib. III. cap. xi. Vol. I.

³ *Euseb. Præp. Evang.* Lib. I. cap. x.

concord (an *attractive* power or quality) is the cause of generation, why things unite and associate together, and form themselves into particular beings, and make up a regular system; so *discord* (a *repelling* power or quality) is the cause of corruption, why things refuse to associate, or why they separate and repel one another, and fall into a jumble and confusion. And that *Empedocles* means no more by these causes, than some *attractive* and *repelling* powers or qualities naturally inherent to matter, is evident from the light wherein *Aristotle* sets the case, when he taxes him for being inconsistent with himself. "Very frequently, says *Aristotle*, as "*Empedocles* gives it out, concord disunites things, and discord unites them: for when the world is dissolved by discord, and reduced to its elements, then fire and each of the other three come severally to be united; and whilst every element enjoys this union and concord in itself, it is necessary, in order to form the world anew, that the parts of each of them disband and fly asunder." This, I say, makes it evident, that *Empedocles* understands by his concord and discord, not the affections of two different minds, but some attractive and repelling powers or qualities naturally inherent to matter; nor does he attribute divinity to these efficient causes. This, as I have before hinted, he bestows upon his *four* elements, which he is pleased to give out as so many

† *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iv. p. 844. Vol. II.*

gods.²¹ After all, *Aristotle* observes that this philosopher admitted, upon the matter, only *two* first causes or principles in the formation of the universe: for now dropping, it should seem, his concord and discord, he attributes the *efficiency*, or the power of motion to *fire*, and conceives water, air, and earth, as if they were only one passive principle².

HAVING hitherto met with no philosopher, who in his enquiries after the origin of motion, seems to have been able to discover an infinite mind as the first mover, and the almighty former of the universe, we shall now examine whether the sentiments of *Pythagoras* and his followers, with respect to this article, may not induce us to conceive a more favourable opinion of the powers of human nature. And here I am afraid I may happen to tire both the reader and myself. There always appear'd to me so much obscurity and confusion in the *Pythagorean* opinion about the formation of the world, that I cannot pretend to explain it in a way to be understood, without going to that length, which will be disproportioned to the other parts of this enquiry, and will greatly need the reader's indulgence. But since some people esteem *Pythagoras* and his followers to be deeply knowing in what relates to the deity, I hope I shall have leave to set forth their principles at large, and to consider their mysterious doctrines in different lights, that we may come to under-

² *Arist. Metaph.* p. 845. Lib. I. cap. iv. Vol. II.

stand whether these philosophers had any notion of an *infinite mind*, or at what distance they were from apprehending the existence of such a being.

“ THIS set of philosophers, as Aristotle reports, being extremely fond of *mathematicks*, the fancy takes them, that the principles of this science are the principles of all beings whatsoever. For happening to apprehend, that as *numbers* are in nature *prior* to other things; so in themselves and in their several affections, proportions, and harmonies, they resemble what things soever either *are*, or come to exist, in far more instances, than *fire*, *earth*, or *water* can do; from hence they came to imagine that the *elements* of *numbers* are the elements of all beings, and that the whole world is *harmony* and *number*; so that whatever they were able to discern in numbers and harmony, answering to the parts and affections of the world, and to the whole order and complexion of things; they never failed to observe it, and were sure to have it adapted accordingly. Thus, these philosophers, gave out the nature or *essence* of the *mind* to be *unity*, that of *justice* to be *quaternity*, the number *four* being the first number that can be divided in *pairs*; and for several reasons, which I need not here mention, they alledged the nature of *time* is the *septenary*. In this manner they proceeded. And when they could not find out things in nature, that might answer to numbers, or their affections

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“ fections and properties, they judge it not a-
 “ miss to supply the defect, by their own in-
 “ vention. Thus, having an opinion that the
 “ *denary* is a perfect number, and that it con-
 “ tains the whole nature of numbers; and at
 “ the same time apprehending, that the uni-
 “ verse is a perfect being; they therefore
 “ maintain, that the universe is made up of
 “ *ten* particular beings. But whereas they are
 “ able to distinguish only *nine* really existing,
 “ *viz. eight heavens* and one *earth*; they are
 “ pleased to supply this defect, by supposing
 “ another earth over against ours, which they
 “ therefore call *αὐτόχθων*. And in their con-
 “ ceit, all these *ten* together do, in their several
 “ motions and revolutions, bring forth the most
 “ exquisite and harmonious melody, which in-
 “ tirely escapes our notice here below, because
 “ it begins with us at our birth.” From all

* *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I cap. v.* *Macrobius* goes about to prove from natural reasons, and the contexture of the soul of the world, that the heavenly bodies must necessarily produce a sound, which among those divine beings, and in consequence of the nature of the *mundane* soul cannot but prove *harmonious*. At the same time he informs us, by what means *Pythagoras* came to find out their *musical* proportions. He assigns, however, another reason for our not distinguishing the *musick* of the heavens, *viz. The sound is greater than human ears are capable*

of receiving. And this being the case, *Tully* seems to observe a just *decorum* in representing *Scipio* lifted up to the heavens, while he hath his ears filled with this grand melody. But *Pythagoras*, it should seem, in this lower world, was far above all human weaknesses, and nothing inferior to *Scipio* in the heavens. Such is the modesty of that man, that, as *Jamblichus* relates the matter, he assumes this as his peculiar privilege, and is pleased to acquaint us, “ that of all mankind, he a-
 “ lone is the person, who here
 “ upon earth was able to di-

which

which *Aristotle* is of opinion, that the *Pythagoreans* held that *number* is the principle, the essence or substance, and as it were the (*ὕλη*) original stuff or matter of all beings; whose

“ flinguish, and perceive the
 “ melody of the *spheres*. So
 “ that while he had immediate access to contemplate
 “ the nature of things themselves, and to improve and
 “ form himself upon the heavenly harmonies; he thought
 “ it enough for other mortals,
 “ (since they were not able to apprehend the *Archetypes* themselves) to look upon him as
 “ their *pattern*, and to form
 “ themselves upon his endowments, or as he would direct
 “ and instruct them. And indeed
 “ his disciples were obliged to
 “ employ a musical *apparatus*
 “ in order to banish all unruly
 “ affections, to purify and elevate their minds to virtue and
 “ goodness, to compose themselves in the *evening* for quiet
 “ rest, pleasing dreams, and
 “ prophetick visions; and in
 “ the *morning*, to relieve their
 “ minds from all *torpor* and
 “ drowsiness: whereas the philosopher himself, far superior
 “ to those mean helps to such
 “ purposes, needed only to prick
 “ up his ears, to bend his mind,
 “ and thus to listen to the music of the heavens.”

I shall not only further observe, that, in the opinion of *Macrobius*, all mankind are here so much delighted with music, because the soul brings along with it into the body the

memory of that musick which it heard in the heavens. And as for birds, and every other living creature, the same author tells us, they are delighted with musick, because they are animated by the soul of the world, which is formed upon musical proportions. In short, the attending *funerals* with musick, as hath been appointed by many nations, comes from this persuasion, that souls leaving the body return to heaven the spring and fountain of melody. *What mighty discoveries are mankind, left to themselves, able to make!* Vid. *Macrob. in somn. scip. Lib. II. cap. i. p. 94. cap. ii. p. 100. cap. iii. p. 102, 103. cap. iv. p. 107. Jambl. in Vit. Pythag. cap. xv.*

It ought here, perhaps, to be remarked, that some people seem to be as fond of ascribing to the ancients the modern ideas in *natural*, as others are in ascribing them the modern ideas in *moral* philosophy. Thus that excellent *Geometrician* Dr. *Gregory* (in *Præfat. ad Astron.*) would very ingeniously persuade us, that *Pythagoras* in his doctrine concerning the *harmony* of the *spheres*, only meant to explain that famous *Theorem* that gives us to understand, that the *gravitation* of the several planets towards the sun is reciprocally as the squares of their distances.

affections,

affections, properties, and relations, must therefore be the same with those of numbers. And as one can see no need, upon this scheme, of introducing the efficiency of an infinite mind (which would rather be contradictory, since they conceive *number* existing before all things whatsoever) so neither does *Aristotle* in the least insinuate, they had any notion of such a being, as the author of motion, and the first cause in the formation of the universe. Nay from *Aristotle's* account of things, it does not appear that *Pythagoras* or any of his followers had the apprehension of an efficient cause of any sort.

INDEED some of his followers gave out *ten couple* of *opposite* principles, viz. *finite* and *infinite*, *even* and *odd*, *one* and *many*, *right* and *left*, *male* and *female*, *rest* and *motion*, *strait* and *crooked*, *light* and *darkness*, *good* and *evil*, *square* and *oblong*; which they conjecture are the first principle or causes of all beings in the universe. *Alcmæon Crotoniates* was, upon the matter, of the same opinion, only he did not limit his principles to a certain number, but gave them out as they might be *coupled*; such as *white* and *black*, *sweet* and *bitter*, *good* and *evil*, *little* and *great*^b. And perhaps, these philosophers conceived, that some sort of *antipathy* in a couple of opposite principles might prove an efficient cause, or the author of motion. But *Aristotle* observes, they talk indistinctly about these princi-

^b *Arist.* ubi supra, p. 846.

ples. They seem however to conceive them under the notion of ($\psi\lambda\eta$) the original *stuff* or matter, of which the world is formed. For they say, they compose the nature or essence of beings. So that, as yet we can by no means suspect, that any of these philosophers had the notion of an infinite mind, which gave being to the universe.

I CONFESS that from the account which *Plutarch* gives us of the opinion of *Pythagoras* about the formation of the world, one may be apt to think, that this philosopher apprehended an *infinite* mind as the *efficient* cause, and *matter* as the *passive*. “ *Pythagoras*, says he, reports the principles of being to be numbers, “ with their symmetries, and proportions, which “ he calls harmonies; and of these are made “ up the elements, that are called *geometrical*. “ But among the principles he particularly mentions *unity*; and the *binary*, which is indetermined or infinite; whereof the *former* affects to be the *active* efficient cause, which is “ a *mind*, viz. God; while the *other* serves as “ the *passive* or material cause, which is the visible world.” From this, I say, one may be apt, perhaps, to imagine that *Pythagoras* was of opinion, that an infinite mind is the efficient cause of the universe. And indeed, I should be glad, could I find in any instance human nature making the discovery. But what shall a man determine in this particular case now be-

* *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph. Lib. I. cap. xiii. p. 876. E.*

fore us? — *Pythagoras* maintains that numbers constitute the nature or essence of all beings whatsoever: And, as *Aristotle* explains our philosopher's sentiments upon this head, *even and odd are the elements of number, whereof one is finite, and the other infinite; but the number one, or unity, shares the nature of each, for it is both even and odd: for if you add it to an even number, it makes it odd; and if you add it to an odd number, it makes it even. So that number is made up of unity.*

Now in this view of things, what can we possibly imagine is *Pythagoras's* notion about the nature of God? For my part, I cannot apprehend he in any sort means a pure infinite mind, absolutely independent, and void of all matter whatsoever. Indeed *unity*, in his opinion, constitutes the inward nature of God; but wherein does this God hereby differ from other beings in the universe? The nature of the human *soul* consists likewise in *unity*; and must not the very same *unity* compose the inward nature of all other particular beings whatsoever? I cannot help suspecting that *Pythagoras* professed only one principle, or cause in the formation of the universe, without apprehending the existence of an infinite mind.

It is true, *Aristotle* informs us, that *Pythagoras* laid down two first causes or principles, namely *even* and *odd*. But since unity, as has been just now hinted, is *even* as well as *odd*, or comprehends the nature of *both*: we are again brought back to *one* cause or principle. And

R

that

that this philosopher held no more, seems further manifest from *D. Laertius*, from whom we learn he maintained, "that the first principle of
 " all things is *monad* or *unity*; that from *monad*
 " comes the infinite *duad* or *binary*, which serves,
 " as the original *stuff* or matter, under *unity*
 " acting in quality of an efficient cause; that
 " from unity and the infinite binary proceed
 " the *numbers*; that from the numbers come
 " *points*; from points, *lines*; from lines, *planes*;
 " from planes, *solid figures*; from these, *sensible*
 " *bodies*; of which there are four elements, *fire*,
 " *water*, *earth*, *air*; that these elements un-
 " dergo mighty changes, and come to form the
 " *universe*, an *animated being*, *intelligent*, *spheri-*
 " *cal*, containing the earth in its center, which is
 " likewise *spherical*, and inhabited all about".
 I do not pretend to understand this *progression* of things in the formation of the world. They are the mere *ravings* of a pretending philosopher, who has conceived a foolish passion to reduce the original of all beings to the elements of *geometry*, his favourite study. I would only

^d *Diod. Laert. in Pythag. p. 220.* Pythagoras here placing the earth in the middle or center of the universe, shews some people the mistake they are in, when they would make him the *inventor* of that system of the heavens, which Copernicus a native of Thorne in Prussia, and canon of Frawenbury in the cathedral of Warmerlandt revived about the beginning of the fifteenth century. As for the author of this system, we are told

by *D. Laertius (in Philolao, p. 234.)* that *Philolaus* the Pythagorean was the first who held that the earth moves in a circle; but, says he, *some alledge that it was Hicteas the Syracusan*; and indeed from the distances and order of the planets, which we learn from *Pliny*, Pythagoras professed, it is easy to judge that Pythagoras himself did not maintain what we now call the Copernican system. Vid. *Plin. Lib. II. cap. xxi, xxii.*

observe,

observe, there is here laid down *only one* cause or principle (nothing resembling an *infinite mind*) from which all other beings are derived.

BUT we shall allow, as *Plutarch* would have it, that *Pythagoras* gave out two *distinct first* causes or principles, *viz. unity* as the efficient; and the infinite or undetermined *binary*, as the passive cause. I would now beg to be informed, what are the particular beings pointed at in this article, by *unity*, and the *infinite binary*? *Plutarch* tells us, that *unity* is a *mind*, *viz. God*: as for the *infinite binary*, he differs in his account of it; for he says, it is the original *stuff* or matter of which this world is composed; and in another place he affirms, that it is a *dæmon*, in its own nature evil, about which the multitude of material beings are conversant*. But whatever *Plutarch* might understand *Pythagoras* to mean by these different *numbers*, I must own I violently suspect that by *unity*, he only means *æther* as the efficient cause; and by the *infinite binary*, *earth*, perhaps, or the *other elements* taken together, as the passive cause†. And in my apprehension, it will be found, there is good reason for this opinion, after we shall have considered what *Pythagoras* really intended in giving out *numbers* as the nature or essence of beings.

PORPHYRY tells us, that “*Pythagoras* being sensible it is extremely difficult to apprehend and express the original natures and first causes of things, has recourse to *numbers*,

* *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.*
cap. vii. p. 881. D.

† *Vid. Stob. Eclog. Phys. Lib. I.*
cap. iii. p. 5.

“ in order to help the mind in its conceptions.
 “ Thus *geometricians*, not being able to explain
 “ in mere words, the nature and properties of
 “ their *geometrical* existences, they find it neces-
 “ sary to make use of figures or *diagrams*; not
 “ at all meaning, that this figure Δ for example,
 “ is really a *geometrical triangle*, but that such
 “ figures have something in them *analogous*,
 “ whereby the mind is enabled more easily to
 “ apprehend the real, abstracted, *geometrical*
 “ things themselves. After the same manner,
 “ and for the same reason, *Pythagoras* has re-
 “ course to *numbers* in explaining the true and
 “ real natures, and the first causes of beings.
 “ Thus, *one* or unity is given out to express
 “ the ground or foundation of the *unity*, the
 “ *identity*, and *uniformity* of the universe, and
 “ as the cause of its concord and *sympathy*,
 “ why it remains stable, always the same, con-
 “ stant, and invariable. And indeed, the *unity*
 “ that prevails in particular beings, is owing to
 “ the union and harmony of the parts, arising
 “ from a participation of the first cause. On
 “ the other hand, *duad* or *binary* serves to re-
 “ present the *double*, two faced, or variable na-
 “ ture of diversity and inequality, of whatever
 “ is divisible, fluctuating, and inconstant: for
 “ with respect to particular beings, such is the
 “ nature of *two* or *binary*.” Thus it is that
Porphry explains this *mysterious* doctrine of *num-*
bers. And it should seem, that by *one* or *unity*,

considered as an *active* principle, *Pythagoras* only means the *reason*, the cause, or foundation of the uniformity and stability of the universe, and particularly of the heavenly bodies, that conspire together in the most perfect harmony, and are always constant and invariable.

It may be thought, perhaps, not so easy to determine, what particular notion *Pythagoras* had of this *reason* or cause. But there is no ground to apprehend, that he thereby understood an infinite mind. *Porphry* seems to think, he means no more by it than what other philosophers do by those *attractive* powers or qualities in matter, whereby, they alledge, the several beings of the universe are strongly united to themselves, and to one another^b. However, if we shall suppose he understands by it some particular being, as the efficient cause of the unity, the harmony, and perpetuity of the universe; I am, I say, of opinion, that *æther* is certainly the being he has in view.

It is to be observed, that what *Pythagoras* here attributes to *reason* or *cause*, to which the number *one* bears some analogy, particularly takes place in the heavens. And indeed, when philosophers talk of the harmony and stability of beings, ever constant and invariable, they always mean the heavenly bodies; to which *Pythagoras* himself, in the quotation to be mentioned immediately, seems to apprehend these properties are *peculiar*. So that when we come

^b *Porph. de Vit. Pythag.* p. 47.

to know what is given out as the *efficient cause* of those heavenly beings, who alone can claim such properties, we shall then likewise know, what is that particular being, which *Pythagoras* esteems an efficient cause, and expresses by *one* or *unity*.

AND this philosopher, as I apprehend, sufficiently explains his notion of the efficient cause of the heavenly bodies, and what he understands by the *reason* or *foundation* of their uniformity and stability, when he argues in this manner ;
 “ the air, *says he*ⁱ, about the earth, being destitute of motion, breeds diseases, and all things in it are mortal ; (this answers to *duad* or *binary*) whereas that which is uppermost, being always in motion, pure, and healthful, all things in it are immortal, and consequently divine ; (this agrees to *monad* or *unity* :) so that *sun*, *moon*, and *stars*, are *gods* ; for they are full of that *heat* or warmth, (*ardor cælestis*, called *æther*^k) which is the cause or fountain of life.” This, I say, makes it manifest, that *Pythagoras* thinks no otherwise than *Balbus* does in *Cicero*, who after having proposed *Pythagoras*’s argument to prove, that the heavenly bodies are animated beings and gods,

ⁱ D. Laert. in *Pythag.* p. 220.

C.

^k Omne igitur quod vivit, five animal, five terra editum, id vivit propter inclusum in se calorem. Ex quo intelligi debet eam caloris naturam, vim in se habere vitalem per omnem mundum pertinentem. — Quare

cum solis ignis similis eorum ignium sit, qui sunt in corporibus animantium, solem quoque animantem esse oportet, & quidem reliqua astra, quæ oriuntur in ardore cælesti, qui æther vel cælum nominatur. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. cap. ix, xv.*

expressly

expressly declares, that the stars, whereof the sun is chief, came from *æther*¹. And *Apollo-nius*, who held, as he was taught by *Iarchas* the head of the *Indian Brachmans*, that the gods have their rise from *æther*, is all along represented by *Philostratus* to profess the *Pythagorean* principles^m. So that *Pythagoras* apprehended *æther* as the efficient cause of the heavenly beings in all their order and stability, and meant to express no other first cause or principle by his number *one* or *unity*. Nor can I think, I have mistaken his sentiments in this article, when I find that what he ascribes to *one* or *unity* he likewise attributes to *æther*.

WE have just now remarked, that *Pythagoras* makes *æther* the foundation or cause of the heavenly bodies, which, in his opinion, are all divine and immortal. In this very light he places his *monad* or *unity*; for he affirms, “that
“the eternal essence of number is the most
“wise and provident principle or cause of the
“universe, heaven, earth, and intermediate nature;
“and is the root or foundation of the
“perpetuity of heavenly things, of gods and
“dæmonsⁿ.” And as *Pythagoras*, according to *Cicero*, maintains that *æther pervades* the whole universe^o; so he likewise professes, “that the
“beauty of the heavenly beings, comes from
“their partaking of the essence of that first

¹ *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* cap. xxxvi.

cap. xxviii. p. 123.

^m *Philostr. de Vit. Apoll.* Lib.

^o *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* Lib. I.

III. cap. xxxiv. p. 124, 125.

cap. xi. & *de Senect.* cap. xxi.

ⁿ *Jamb. de Vit. Pythagor.*

"being or cause, which can only be apprehended by one's mind, and is the nature of numbers and proportions pervading the universe." Upon all which I cannot but rest assured, that *æther* is the efficient cause, which *Pythagoras* expresses by his *monad* or unity. And if we allow his *duad* or binary to be the passive cause or principle; this we may take to signify the *other* elements, (as *Empedocles* understood them, who in many instances followed *Pythagoras*) which answer to the nature of that number, as it is given out to be various, fluctuating, and inconstant. But I confess, I am rather inclined to think, that *Pythagoras* held only one cause or principle of the universe. And as he conceived *air* and *water* to be *æther* less or more condensed; so perhaps he apprehended *earth* to come from the same original. If he retained, however, his master's doctrine, he must have held *earth* to be a principle as well as *æther*.

Now as this philosopher regarded the *æther*, as the efficient cause in the formation of the world; so, like other philosophers, he certainly imagined, it is the *supreme deity*: it is indeed most likely, that he expressed his notion of God by *unity* or the number *one*. But we are told in *Diogenes Laertius* that he held that *human*

^p Jambl. ubi supra, cap. xii. p. 45.

^q D. Laert. in Pythag. p. 220. D.

^r Θετακός μὲν ἀρχαὶ εἶναι λίγας Ζῆνα, καὶ Χθονίαν, καὶ Κεχρονίαν.

Ζῆνα μὲν τὴν αἰθέρα, Χθονίαν δὲ τὴν γῆν, Κεχρονίαν δὲ τὴν ὕδατος. ὁ μὲν αἰθέρα τοῦ πνεύματος, ὁ δὲ γῆν τοῦ πάχους, ὁ δὲ ὕδατος τοῦ ὕδατος. Herm. Itrris. Gentil. Philosph. cap. xii.

souls are portions of *aether*, and are therefore immortal, because the *aether* is so^t: and when we reflect, that *Cicero* declares, it was *Pythagoras's* opinion that our souls are portions of God^t, there can be no doubt but he apprehended, that *aether* is God; which after him, *Euripides* does in these verses:

Ὅρα'ς τ' ὑψὺ τ' δ' ἀπειρον αἰθέρα,
Καὶ γῆν πέριξ ἔχονθ' ὕγρας ἐν ἀγκάλαις.
Τῶτον νόμιζε Ζῆνα, τ' δ' ἡγῶ θεόν.

*Vides sublime fufum, immoderatum æthera,
Qui tenero terram circumjectu amplectitur,
Hunc fumum habeto divom; hunc perhibeto
Jovem.*

So that *Pythagoras's* supreme deity, is no other but what they call the soul of the world^x, or what is said in the *Orphick* verses to be the mind of God, whilst the other parts of the universe (taking God to be this complexion of things) are the members of his *body*:

Ζεὺς πρῶτ' ὅς γένητο, Ζεὺς ὕστατ' ἀργαίραυν' ὅς.
Ζεὺς κεφαλὴ, Ζεὺς μέσος, Διὸς δ' ὅς ἐκ πάντα
τέτυκται.

Ζεὺς βασιλεὺς, Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἀπάντων ἀρχιγένεθ-
λ' ὅς.

Ἐν πρώτῳ, εἰς δαίμων γένητο, μέγας ἄρχος
ἀπάντων.

Ἐν ᾧ ὅς βασιλεῖον, ἐν ᾧ τὰδε πάντα κυκλεῖ.

^t *D. Laert.* ubi supra, E.

^c *Cic. de Senect.* cap. xxi.

^x *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* Lib. II.
cap. xxv.

^x *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.*

Lib. IV. cap. vii. p. 909. *Sext.*

Emp. adv. Math. Lib. VIII.

p. 331. B.

Πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ, καὶ γαῖα, καὶ αἰθήρ, νόξ τε καὶ ἡμᾶρ.
 Τὸ δῆτοι κεφαλὴν μὲν ἰδεῖν, καὶ καλὰ πρόσωπα,
 Οὐρανὸς αἰγλήεις, ὃν χρύσειαι ἀμφὶς ἐθειραν
 Ἀστρῶν μαρμαρέων περικαλλέες ἡρέθονται.
 Ὀμματα δ' ἡελίος τε, καὶ ἀντιόωσα σελήνη.
 Νῆς δὲ γε αἰψευδὴς βασιλῆϊ, ἀφθιτ' αἰθήρ .κ.λ.¹

AND it may be remarked, that this conceit wherein they apprehend *æther* (which they call *Jupiter*) to be God, the cause of animal life, and as it were, the *parent of all things*, pervading the universe (from whence the poet comes to style it,

Πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε)

induced the *Phœnicians* and *Ægyptians*, not only to represent God, under the parts of various animals compounded together; but to *worship* brute creatures, and to *deify serpents* in particular, because these creatures, as they imagine, are animated with a greater quantity of spirit or *æther*.

I WOULD now beg leave to give an account of *Pythagoras's* principles, as they are explained by *Sextus Empiricus*; that we may fully understand, whether it can be judged he had any notion of an *infinite mind* as the author and former of the universe.

“ *NATURALISTS* of the best learning,
 “ says *Sextus Empiricus*, have attributed so much
 “ virtue to *numbers*, that they esteem them to
 “ be the principles and elements of all things.

¹ *Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. III. cap. ix.* *Porph. de Abst. Lib. IV. § 9.*

² *Diod. Sicul. Lib. I. p. 11. A.* *Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. I. cap. x. p. 40. D.*

“ The *Pythagoreans* are the *naturalists* I have in
“ view; and they tell us, that such as philoso-
“ phize in a pointed and exact manner, are
“ like those who are employed about speech or
“ language. For as this sort of men do first
“ examine *words* before they come to *speech*,
“ which is made up of words; and before they
“ attend to words, do first consider *syllables* of
“ which words are compounded; and before
“ they regard syllables, do first take notice of
“ *letters*, the elements of language that make
“ up syllables: so those true *naturalists*, say the
“ *Pythagoreans*, who enquire into the universe,
“ ought first of all to examine, what are the
“ principles into which it resolves itself.

“ Now, it is some way *unnatural* to alledge,
“ that the principle of all things, is something
“ that appears, or is *sensible*; for every thing
“ that appears must be made up of things that
“ do not appear; but that which is made up
“ of *some* things, is not itself a principle; the
“ principle is that which makes up the com-
“ position: so that things which appear, or are
“ *sensible*, cannot be called the principles of the
“ universe; these are what make up the things
“ that do appear, while they themselves e-
“ scape our senses. And therefore, these phi-
“ losophers report the principles of the universe
“ to be the things not appearing, or that lye
“ beyond the reach of our senses; not indeed
“ in the common way; for those who give
“ out *atoms*, *homæomeries*, *small magnitudes* or
“ particles, or in general, *bodies only apprehended*
“ by

“ by the mind, as the principles of the universe,
 “ are in one respect right, and in another re-
 “ spect they are wrong; for so far they are
 “ right, that they judge the principles of things
 “ lye beyond the notice of our senses; but here-
 “ in they are wrong, that they judge them *cor-*
 “ *poreal*. For as bodies, that lye out of the
 “ reach of our senses, and are perceived only
 “ by the mind, come before *sensible* bodies; so
 “ things *incorporeal* ought to precede bodies,
 “ which the mind alone can apprehend. And
 “ there is good reason to say so: for as the
 “ elements of words, are not words, so neither
 “ are bodies the elements of bodies. In short,
 “ they must either be bodies, or things *incor-*
 “ *poreal*; and beyond question, they are *incor-*
 “ *poreal*. Nor can it be said, that atoms chance
 “ to be eternal, and therefore, though they are
 “ corporeal, yet they may prove the origin
 “ of all things. For in the first place, those
 “ who alledge, that homœomeries, small mag-
 “ nitudes, the least things and altogether indi-
 “ visible, are the elements of the universe, do
 “ maintain that all these several things are eter-
 “ nal; so that atoms have no better title to
 “ be principles than those have: and then let
 “ it be granted, that atoms are really eternal;
 “ yet as those who profess the world is un-
 “ generated and eternal, do nevertheless attempt
 “ to conceive in their minds, what are the prin-
 “ ciples that originally compose it; so we, say
 “ the *Pythagoreans*, who reckon ourselves among
 “ natural philosophers, do endeavour to apprehend

“hend what those bodies are made up of, that
 “are eternal, and only perceived by the mind.
 “And they are made up, either of bodies, or
 “of things *incorporeal*. But we cannot say
 “they are made up of bodies; for we should
 “then be obliged to confess, that those bodies
 “are made up of other bodies; and thus our
 “notions going on *in infinitum*, we should never
 “come to perceive the origin of the universe.
 “It remains therefore, that we hold, that
 “bodies only apprehended by the mind, are
 “made up of things *incorporeal*. And this *Epi-*
 “*curus* himself confesseth; for he says, that
 “the mind perceives bodies under a combina-
 “tion of colour, magnitude, resistance and
 “gravity.

“THUS from what is said, it is manifest
 “that the principles of bodies only apprehended
 “by the mind, are *incorporeal*. Not that things
 “incorporeal, which are prior to bodies, are
 “therefore of necessity the elements of things,
 “and first principles: for we find that *ideas*,
 “according to *Plato*, are things incorporeal,
 “they are prior to bodies, and the universe
 “is formed upon them; and yet they are not
 “for all that, the principles of things; for
 “every idea taken by itself is said to be *one*,
 “but to be *two*, or *three*, or *four*, as it is
 “numbered in company with others. So that
 “*number* is something transcending the nature
 “or essence of ideas; whereof as they hap-
 “pen to partake, they are called *one*, *two*,
 “*three*, *four*, or more. Besides, that solid fi-
 “gures

" gures that have an *incorporeal* nature, are
 " apprehended in the mind before bodies;
 " and yet they are not the principles of all
 " things: for before these the mind conceives
 " plain figures, of which solid figures are com-
 " posed. Neither can one give out plain fi-
 " gures, as the elements of things; for every
 " plain figure is made up of lines, that come
 " before it. And as for lines they relate to
 " *numbers*, that are first apprehended; in as
 " much as that which consists of three lines,
 " is called a triangle, and that which consists
 " of four, a square. In short, as a single line
 " is not apprehended in the mind without *num-*
 " *ber*, but being drawn from one point to ano-
 " ther, is interested in the number *two*; so
 " all numbers whatsoever fall under the *num-*
 " *ber one*. Thus a *binary* number is one bi-
 " nary; a *ternary* is something one, *viz.* a ter-
 " nary; and a *denary* is one top and perfection
 " of number.

" Now from all this *Pythagoras* being de-
 " termined, he pronounced *unity* to be the
 " principle of things; by a participation whereof
 " every particular thing is called *one*. And
 " further taught, that unity is indeed in the mind
 " apprehended unity, when considered in its
 " own *sameness* or *identity*; but compared to
 " itself, in the way of *altereity*, it then pro-
 " duces the *indeterminate* or *infinite binary*, so
 " called because it is none of those binaries,
 " that are numbered and determined, though
 " all binaries are perceived in the mind as they
 " partake

“ partake of it; which is the way they argue
 “ in the case of unity.

“ THERE are therefore two principles of
 “ things, namely, the *first, unity*; from a par-
 “ ticipation of which, all numerable unities are
 “ apprehended unities: and next, the *indeter-*
 “ *minate* or *infinite binary*, from a participation
 “ of which, all particular and determined bi-
 “ naries, are binaries. And that these are in
 “ truth the principles of all things, is explained
 “ various ways by the *Pythagoreans*. — From
 “ these, they say, comes the *one* that is in
 “ numbers, and likewise the *two*. It is plain
 “ that *one* comes from the first unity; and from
 “ unity and the indeterminate binary come *two*;
 “ for twice one is two: but two not yet sub-
 “ sisting in numbers, there can be no such
 “ thing as *twice*; but this is taken from the
 “ indeterminate binary: and thus from the in-
 “ determinate binary and unity come the binary
 “ or *two* that we count in numbers. After the
 “ same manner proceed the other numbers,
 “ and arise from the same principles; *one* al-
 “ ways going on, and the *indeterminate binary*
 “ generating two, and extending numbers to
 “ an infinite degree. Hence they maintain that
 “ in these principles, *unity* is as the *efficient*
 “ *cause*, and *binary* as the *passive matter*. And
 “ as the *Pythagoreans* do thus generate *num-*
 “ *bers* from these principles, so from the same
 “ principles do they likewise produce the *world*
 “ and all things in it.”

² *Sext. Emp. adv. Math. Lib. IX. p. 422,—427.*

THEY represent *one* or *unity*, as a *point*; the *binary* number as the *longitude*; the *ternary* as *latitude*; and the *quaternary* as *profundity*. From which, as other philosophers do in their way, they introduce the generation of bodies. This seems to be the *first effort* which begins the production of the universe. And the bodies thus generated, I take to be those which they conceive to be ἀδηλα ἢ νοητὰ σώματα, bodies not obvious to the senses, and to be apprehended only by the mind: in my opinion, they are the bodies that compose the *æther*, which upon their scheme, as I have before hinted, is the root and foundation, the first cause and principle of all things. And it should seem, that the *Pythagoreans* chusing to distinguish these original bodies by the name of *monads*, some philosophers have from hence taken occasion to report *in general*, that the *Pythagorean* monads have *magnitude* and are *corporeal*; that they are small bodies or particles like the *atoms* of *Epicurus*, which are likewise called *monads*:

Ταῦτ' εἰδὼς, σοφὸς ἴδρι, μάτην δ' Ἐπικύρον ἴασον
Πᾶ τὸ κενὸν ζητεῖν, καὶ τίνες αἱ μονάδες.

Thus *Aristotle* observes, *there is no odds in saying monads or small bodies*; and particularly takes notice, *that the Pythagoreans supposed their monads to have magnitude*. But from what has been just now said, one should think it manifest, that these philosophers maintained a sort of monads that are quite *incorporeal*, and in my apprehension, no other but *abstracted metaphysical unities*,
that

that of themselves have no existence; which, however, they are pleased to give out as contributing towards the production of these secondary monads, that are corporeal, and *σώματα*.

Now from those corporeal monads, small bodies or atoms, produced in the manner just now hinted, and making up, as I apprehend, what they call *æther*, are generated these bodies, which we generally call the *four* elements, *fire, air, water, earth*. So that these monads or atoms are the principles, or the *elements* of the *elements*. Thus the matter is explained by *Sextus Empiricus* in the place above referred too. *Plutarch* represents *Empedocles* to profess the same doctrine^b: and we learn from *Diogenes Laertius* that it was likewise held by *Democritus*^c.

THUS the four elements being produced, these generate other beings; and in a word, bring forth the universe, which, as we shall see immediately, was formed, and subsists upon those proportions that make up the exactest harmony.

IN this manner the *Pythagoreans* accounted for the formation of the world. And it is to be remarked, that these numbers, *one, two, three, four* (which arise from the *first monad* or unity, and the *indeterminate binary*, and which, having the same virtue that is ascribed to a *point*, to *longitude, latitude, and profundity*, are the root and foundation of all things) I say, it is to be remarked, that the nature of these numbers en-

^b *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.*
Lib. I. cap. xvii.

^c *Diog. Laert. in Democrit.*
p. 148. C.

ters into, and constitutes the nature and essence of all beings, and runs through and pervades the whole universe. So that what particular nature and properties soever do belong to these numbers; of the same nature and properties is the universe, and all the several beings contained in it. And therefore,

IN the first place, these numbers, *one, two, three, four*, being absolutely perfect (for taken together they are equal to *ten*, which is the top and perfection of number; since whenever we arrive at *ten* we return to *one*, and from thence begin again to number^d) the universe must likewise in all respects be held perfect and compleat.

IN the next place, these numbers contain the nature and proportions of *harmony*: for perfect harmony seems to consist in three *symphonies*, namely, *diatessaron*, *diapente*, and *diapason*, all which have their proportions in *one, two, three, four*, for that of *diatessaron* is as *four* to *three*; that of *diapente*, as *three* to *two*; and that of *diapason*, as *two* to *one*, or *four* to *two*. And therefore the universe having arisen out of these

^d It is pretty surprising how the number *ten* comes from any such reason to be esteemed the most perfect number. For one should think, if we follow our ideas of things, that when we come to *ten*, we then no more return and begin at *one* again, than we do at any of the intermediate numbers. The only difference is, the intermediate numbers are expressed by dif-

ferent marks or figures, and coming to *ten*, we begin at *one*, and regularly carry on the other figures, as they lye in order in the place of *unites*; which is a thing wholly arbitrary. Mean while, does the common custom of counting to *ten*, and returning to *one* again, take its rise from any other cause, but peoples having no more than *ten figures*?

numbers,

numbers, its nature and properties, and those of all its parts and particular beings, whether bodies or *souls*, must likewise consist in the same proportions and harmony. So that the universe is a compleat and perfect being, and formed in the whole, and in all its parts, bodies and souls, upon the exact proportions of harmony.

Now these *four numbers*, which thus contribute to the formation of the world, in so wonderful a manner, are called *τετρακτύς*, the *four*. And this *τετρακτύς* (not four unites, but the *four numbers equal to ten*) which was capable of performing such astonishing *feats*, raised such amazement in the minds of the *Pythagoreans*, that they held it *sacred*, in the highest veneration, and solemnly pronounced it, the *spring and root of eternal nature*. As for *Pythagoras* himself, he was counted a *God* for the discovery; and his disciples judged it the most natural oath to swear by their *master* and his *τετρακτύς*°.

Ὅου μὰ τὸν ἀμετέρεα ψυχᾷ παραδόντα Τετρακτύν,
Πηγὴν αἰετῆς φύσεως, ρίζα μὰ τ' ἔχουσιν.

THIS, I verily believe, is the true and genuine train of reasoning, which *Pythagoras* and his followers indulged, in apprehending and explaining the formation of the universe. “*Pythagoras*, says *Mr. Hooker*, by bringing up
“ his scholars in — speculative knowledge of
“ numbers, made their conceits therein so

° *Sext. Emp. adv. Math. Lib. IV. p. 104. Lib. VII. p. 154.*

“ strong, that, when they came to the con-
 “ templation of things natural, they imagined
 “ that in every particular thing, they even be-
 “ held, as it were with their eyes, how the ele-
 “ ments of *number* gave essence and being to
 “ the works of nature: a thing in reason im-
 “ possible; which notwithstanding, through
 “ their mis-fashioned preconceit, appeared unto
 “ them no less certain, than if nature had writ-
 “ ten it in the very foreheads of all the creatures
 “ of God^f.” The reader, I am afraid, will not
 easily be reconciled to my having given so long
 an account of it. But it serves to shew us so
 much the more fully, what confusion and per-
 plexity these philosophers must have had in
 their thoughts, when they went about to con-
 ceive the first production of things. And I
 should think we cannot but clearly see, they
 were at an infinite distance from having any
 notion of the deity. They do not seem to
 suspect there are any such beings in the universe
 as *pure spirits*; and therefore do they account
 for the formation of *souls*, in the same manner
 they do for the generation of bodies, without
 taking notice of any the least difference in their
 production. Indeed they maintain, there are
 things *incorporeal* eternally existing, from which
 the universe derives its original. But what is
 their boasted *incorporeal tetractys*, which they
 give out as the *spring and root of eternal nature*?
 It is a mere metaphysical notion, of the same

^f Hook. Ecclesiast. Polit. Pref. p. 49.

existence and reality with *mathematical points and lines*. — What is their *first monad* or unity, and their *indeterminate* or infinite *binary*, from which their *tetractys* hath its nature and being? — These again are *abstruse metaphysical* notions, that yet rise higher than the former; they precisely coincide with the notions of those philosophers who profess the doctrine of *abstracted essences*, which by a communication of their nature are said to make things to be what they are. Thus *Peter* is less than *Paul* by the head, because he partakes of the essence of *littleness*; and *one* and *one* make *two* by a participation of the essence of *duality*; as *one* is *one* by the participation of unity. In short, in *Pythagoras's* scheme about the formation of the universe, we meet with no beings that have a real existence, till we come to the *ἄδηλα καὶ νοητὰ σώματα*, their corporeal monad or atoms perceived only by the mind, which generate the four elements, from whence the world takes

§ *Plat. in Phædon. p. 100. E. Vol. I.* It is extremely odd to reflect into what extravagant whims and conceits, the best of men, when they give the loose to a *metaphysical* brain, will run up themselves, and seriously regard as solid truths. "When one is added to one, says *Socrates* in a very solemn manner, I do not believe I can tell, whether it is *that* very one to which the other is added, that becomes two; or whether the one added, and the one to which the ad-

dition was made, make two together? For in their separate state, each of them was one and not two; and after their being placed one by the other, they became two. Neither can I tell you how upon the division of any thing, what was formerly one becomes two, from the very minute of division: for that cause is quite contrary to *that* which makes one and one become two." *Id. ibid. p. 96. E.*

its rise. So that according to this set of philosophers, there is no incorporeal being really existing in the universe^b. And

ONE should think, that these philosophers have failed in discovering the being and perfections of an infinite mind, not for want of *abstracted* reasoning. I dare venture to say, what may be a caution to us in this age in many instances, that one of the greatest causes of that gross and surprizing *ignorance* that prevailed among the ancients in relation to the deity, was their being too *abstracted* and too *metaphysical*. They seem to have scorned, or to have had no sense of the sure way of purchasing knowledge, by following a long train of experiments; they give up themselves to the heat of fancy and imagination, and form *hypotheses* at random;

^b Some people may be apt to imagine, that Hierocles declares quite the contrary in his *commentary* upon the *golden verses*, when he expresses himself thus:

Ἐπὶ τῷ δημιουργικῷ μόνῳ αὐτῶν
θεῶν ἀναφέρειν τὸ σέβας, ὃν θεὸν
θεῶν κυρίως ἀνέποι τις, καὶ θεὸν
ὑπατοῦ, καὶ ἀετοῦ ἢ ὅντως
ἐξίσταν τὴν κοσμοποιῶν καὶ ἀετο-
σέχου θεῶν μόνως ἀνιζεύομεν, ἢ
καὶ θεῶν αὐτίκον αὐτὸν, καὶ ἀπείκλων
λογικῶν νοσίων ποιητὴν θεσάμεθα.
p. 10, and p. 229. Τὰ ὄντα
πάντα, says he, ἡ Τετρεῖς ἀνεδή-
σατο, συγκρίων, ἀειδμεν, ὡρῶν
τῷ ἴσῳ, ἡλικίῳ συνουκισμῶν καὶ
ἀπὸ ἴσου ληπτῶν, ὃ μὴ τῷ Τετρε-
κτύῳ, ὡς εἶδος καὶ ἀρχὴς ἡγεῖται.
Ἐπὶ τοῦ, ὡς ἴσος, δημιουργὸς τοῦ
ἅλου καὶ αἰθῆρας ἡ Τετρεῖς, θεὸς νο-

τὸς, αὐτίκῳ τῷ ἴσῳ καὶ αἰσθη-
τῷ θεῷ. But the θεὸς νοτὸς here
mentioned is said to be Τετρεῖς,
which, I have observed, is only a *metaphysical* notion. And
if Hierocles means by it, as I
cannot but think he does, some
particular being really existing;
I must own, I cannot help rest-
ing assured, that according to
the *Pythagorean* principles, he
has no other being in view but
aether; which, as I have ex-
plained, is made up of νοητὰ
σώματα, (therefore properly e-
nough called, θεὸς νοτὸς) and
is counted the first cause and au-
thor of all things, particularly
of the gods, the heavenly bo-
dies, and of rational souls, that
are all portions of *aether*.

upon

upon which they vainly set up to explain and account for every thingⁱ.

I WOULD now fain think I may safely profess my opinion, and openly declare, that, so far as I can judge, *Pythagoras* and his followers were totally ignorant of *our God*. And I leave it to the reader further to reflect, whether in reason it can be thought, that *Pythagoras* had any notion of the efficiency of an infinite mind in the formation of the universe, when he *seriously* tells us, that *at the time when things were first a forming, men and beans sprung up together from the same sort of putrid matter*; and gravely pretends to make it appear from some very odd observations. “*Pythagoras, says Porphyry, equally forbade the eating of beans and of human flesh*. And they tell us, that he made this prohibition; because the first original and generation of the universe being in disorder, and many things happening to be jumbled and confounded, and to lye rotting together in the earth, their separation and production came on by degrees; and animals and plants growing up by one another, then it was that *men arose, and beans sprung forth out of the*

ⁱ Antiquiores ex Græcis impetu tantum intellectus usi, regulam non adhibuerunt; sed omnia in acri meditatione, & mentis volutatione & agitatione perpetua posuerunt. *Nov. Organ. Præf. Part. II.*

Qui autem veræ physicae principia legesque rerum sola mentis vi & interno rationis lumine fre-

tum invenire se posse confidit; hunc oportet vel statuere mundum ex necessitate fuisse, legesque propositas ex eadem necessitate sequi; vel, si per voluntatem Dei constitutus sit ordo naturæ, se tamen, homuncionem misellum, quid optimum factu sit perspectum habere. *Cot. in Præfat. ad Newt. Princip.*

“ *same putrefaction.* Of this (*continues Por-*
 “ *phyry, who writ with great keenness against the*
 “ *christian revelation*) he brings some manifest
 “ proofs; for let a man chew or grind a *bean*
 “ with his teeth, if he leaves it a little while
 “ exposed to the intense heat of the sun, and
 “ returns after a short time, he shall find it to
 “ smell of *human blood.* Again, at the time
 “ when beans are blooming, let one take a *little*
 “ *bit of bloom* growing black, and put it in an
 “ earthen vessel, cover it and bury it in the
 “ earth, and keep it thus buried for *ninety*
 “ days; if after this he digs it up, and un-
 “ covers it, he shall find in place of the *bean,*
 “ either a *child's head formed,* ἡ γυναικὸς αἰδοῖον ^k.”
 So that, as *Empedocles* says,

Ἴσόν τοι κυάμῃ τρώγειν, κεφαλὰς τε τοκίων.

To me it seems impossible for a man of such notions (which I shall afterwards observe more particularly in the case of *Anaxagoras*) ever to come of himself to apprehend an infinite mind, as any way concerned in the production of the world. The story of *Prometheus's clay* is more plausible¹.

I SHALL now enquire into the opinion of the *Stoicks* concerning the *author of motion,* or the *first cause* in the formation of the universe. And the first view which these philosophers seem to

^k *Porphy. de Vit. Pythagor.*

¶ 43.

¹ *Pausan. in Phoc.* p. 319.

L. 21.

have

have had of things, before they were formed as we now see them, was this :

THEY conceived the existence of some original *stuff* or matter destitute of all *form*, and every quality whatever now attributed to body, which had no beginning, and is never to have an end. This *stuff* or matter they called a principle, and imagined it to be quite different from an element, wherein *Thales* and some other philosophers made no distinction: but at the same time, they maintained that it is made up and composed of all the four elements.

THE next thought or question is, how came this original *stuff* to be put in motion, or how came the universe to arise out of it? Here I confess, I am at a stand, and I know not well what sense to make of what they give out in this article: but they seem to say, that the formation of the world is owing to some inherent virtue diffused through the whole, or rather to some special virtue of the *æther* included in that original *stuff* or matter, and serving as a *sperma-tick* quality towards the production of the universe. Thus they report, that by the agency or influence of *æther* (sometimes called *air*) the original *stuff* is first reduced to *water*, or a moist watery substance; and thus having contracted or acquired a *fitness* for the production of particular beings, the grosser parts subside into *earth*, while the subtiler parts become *air*, and the subtilest of all make up *fire* or *æther*, the rest remaining *water*; from which four elements thus arising out of the original *stuff*, and again
mixing

mixing together in such a proportion, proceed plants and animals, and all other beings^m.

In this manner the *Stoicks* explain the formation of the world. And it should seem manifest, that they apprehended *æther* or fire to be the first cause or author of motion, without having any thought or suspicion of an *infinite mind*. And as they conceived *æther* to be the *efficient cause* of all things; so with them, (as other philosophers, each upon his own scheme, were always wont to profess themselves,) it is the *supreme deity*, who not only formed itselfⁿ, and the world at first, but continues to animate the world as our souls do our body. *Virgil* describes it in this manner:

*Principio, cælum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra,
Spiritus intus alit: totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, & magno se corpore miscet.
Inde hominum, pecudumque genus, vitæque vo-*
lantum,

*Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquore pontus,
Ingens est ollis vigor, & cælestis origo
Seminibus.*^o

I CONFESS it may be alledged, that these philosophers assign *two* distinct different causes in the formation of the universe, whereof one is *efficient*, and the other *passive*; that the pas-

^m *Diog. Laert. in Zenon.* ⁿ *Cic. Acad. Lib. II. cap.*
p. 196, 197, 198, 199, 201. E. xxxvii.
Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. ^o *Virg. Æneid. 6. v. 724.*
Lib. XV. cap. xiv, &c.

five principle is *matter*, void of all form and quality; and that the efficient cause is *God*, an eternal being. But then, I say, they maintain that this *God*, to whom they ascribe the efficiency, is no other but *fire* or *æther*, pervading and enlivening all the several parts of the universe, changing itself into every form, and producing things according to their several *spermatick* qualities, or as they are in their nature *fatally* disposed and adapted to the production of such particular beings^p.

*Vere tument terræ, & genitalia semina poscunt.
Tum pater omnipotens sæcundis imbribus æther
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, & omnes
Magnus alit magno commistus corpore fœtus*^q.

So that the world, or the universe, as we now see it, having this sort of God or soul in it, is in their opinion, one great animated being, whereof all particular beings, our bodies and souls, and those of all other animals, are so many parts or members, which only spring forth and return again, and with respect to the world, do not die.

*Esse apibus partem divinæ mentis, & haustus
Æthereos dixere: Deum namque ire per omnes*

^p *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.*
Lib. I. cap. vi. p. 879. cap. vii.
p. 881. F. Vol. II. *This God*,
or this efficient cause, as *Cicero*
gives it out, seems to be no
more than a *virtue* or *quality*
necessarily inherent to *matter*,
which can only subsist in mat-

ter, and without which the parts
of matter could not *cohere* to-
gether. So that they are mu-
tually necessary to each others
subsistence. *Cic. Acad. 2. Lib. I.*
cap. vii.

^q *Virg. Georg. II. v. 324.*

Terrasque

mixing together in such a proportion, proceed *plants* and *animals*, and all other beings^m.

IN this manner the *Stoicks* explain the formation of the world. And it should seem manifest, that they apprehended *æther* or fire to be the first cause or author of motion, without having any thought or suspicion of an *infinite mind*. And as they conceived *æther* to be the *efficient cause* of all things; so with them, (as other philosophers, each upon his own scheme, were always wont to profess themselves,) it is the *supreme deity*, who not only formed itselfⁿ, and the world at first, but continues to animate the world as our souls do our body. *Virgil* describes it in this manner:

*Principio, cælum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra,
Spiritus intus alit: totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, & magno se corpore miscet.
Inde hominum, pecudumque genus, vitæque va-
lantum,
Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquore pontus,
Ingens est ollis vigor, & cælestis origo
Seminibus.*^o

I CONFESS it may be alledged, that these philosophers assign *two* distinct different causes in the formation of the universe, whereof one is *efficient*, and the other *passive*; that the pas-

^m *Diog. Laert. in Zenon.* ⁿ *Cic. Acad. Lib. II. cap.*
p. 196, 197, 198, 199, 201. E. xxxvii.
Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. ^o *Virg. Æneid. 6. v. 724.*
Lib. XV. cap. xiv, &c.

five principle is *matter*, void of all form and quality; and that the efficient cause is *God*, an eternal being. But then, I say, they maintain that this God, to whom they ascribe the efficiency, is no other but *fire* or *æther*, pervading and enlivening all the several parts of the universe, changing itself into every form, and producing things according to their several *spermatick* qualities, or as they are in their nature *fatally* disposed and adapted to the production of such particular beings^p.

*Vere tument terræ, & genitalia semina poscunt.
Tum pater omnipotens sæcundis imbribus æther
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, & omnes
Magnus alit magno commistus corpore fœtus^q.*

So that the world, or the universe, as we now see it, having this sort of God or soul in it, is in their opinion, one great animated being, whereof all particular beings, our bodies and souls, and those of all other animals, are so many parts or members, which only spring forth and return again, and with respect to the world, do not die.

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or this efficient cause, as *Cicero*
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more than a *virtue* or *quality*
necessarily inherent to *matter*,
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ter, and without which the parts
of matter could not *cohere* to-
gether. So that they are mu-
tually necessary to each others
subsistence. *Cic. Acad. 2. Lib. I.*
cap. vii.

^q *Virg. Georg. II. 324.*

Terrasque

Terrasque, tractusque maris, cælumque profundum.

Hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne ferarum,

Quemque sibi tenues nascentem arcessere vitas.

Scilicet huc reddi deinde, ac resoluta referri

Omnia, nec morti esse locum —^r.

For, as *Cbrysippus* observes, “ since death is the
“ separation of the soul from the body, and the
“ soul of the world is not indeed separated, but
“ *increases continually*, till it has *consumed all*
“ *matter* into itself, it is not to be said that
“ the world dies^r.”

THUS a *mechanical fire*, or *æther*, being the efficient cause, or the supreme God, the *omnipotent Father*, acknowledged by the *Stoicks*, we may thereby guess at what an infinite distance these philosophers were from having any knowledge of the *one, only living, and true God*. Mean while, when one considers, that as mankind have been always prone to believe, there is a material universally pervading spirit, so our best modern philosophers, though they are far from deifying that spirit or reporting it to be intelligent, do yet ascribe to it very extraordinary virtues and powers, very wonderful influences and effects. Perhaps it can be thought no great wonder that the *Stoicks* and other ancient philosophers went a step higher, and endowing it with intelligence, came to rest in it as the su-

^r *Virg. Georg. IV. v. 219.*

p. 1052. C. Vol. II.

^r *Plat. de Stoicorum Repugn.*

preme deity[†]. In all respects, however, their opinion is extremely irrational[‡]. “The deity, “*says Origen*, is a body in the opinion of the “*Stoicks*; who are not ashamed to call him “mutable, every way alterable and changeable, “having nothing to hinder him from being “destroyed, was there any thing to bring destruction upon him; and *lucky* in not being “destroyed, because there is nothing to destroy “him[×].” And in another place he says: “The “God of the *Stoicks*, being a body, sometimes indeed the mind or intellect ingrosses “the whole of matter or substance to itself; “which is the case, when the *conflagration* “happens: but at other times, it has only a “part of it; which happens when the universe “is formed and put in order. For these philosophers *were not able to pierce into the purely “spiritual nature of God*, as a being wholly “incorruptible, simple, uncompounded, and “indivisible[‡].” To the same purpose *Plutarch* observes it was the opinion of *Chrysippus*, “that “when the world is all on fire, it presently “becomes (all over soul and intellect) the soul “and guide of itself: but when it changes into “moisture, and into the soul that remains in “it, in a sort, into body and soul, so as to “consist of these; it then comes to exist af-

[†] Vid. *Newt. Prin. Lib. III. Prop. 41. p. 473. Ib. Schol. General. p. 484. & Opt. B. 3 Qu. 18.—24. Boerb. Chem. Vol. I. p. 143, 144, 187,—189. Galib.*

[‡] Vid. *Continuat. de Pens. divers. chap. cv, cvi.*

[×] *Orig. contr. Cels. Lib. I. p. 17.*

[‡] *Id. ibid. Lib. IV. p. 169.*

“ter another manner”. These sentiments at first sight appear extravagantly absurd.

I SHALL only remark further, that this notion which the *Stoicks* entertained of God, as the soul of the world, mightily prevailed among learned men, and seems at all times wonderfully *catching* among common people. The very learned Dr. *Cudworth* tells us, that this opinion found entertainment amongst so many of the *Heathens*, probably for this reason; “because it was so obvious for those of them that were religious to conceive, that as themselves consisted of *body* and *soul*, so the *body* of the *whole world*, was not without its *soul* neither: and that their *human souls* were as well derived from the *life and soul of the world*, as the earth and water in their bodies was, from the earth and water of the world.” And I doubt not but in those days, they might be greatly delighted with this account of the parts and members of this great animal: “The *stars*, as *Plutarch* gives it out, being fixt, like *glittering eyes* in the face of the universe, turn continually about; the *sun* having the force and vigour of the *heart*, sends and distributes its heat and light, like blood and spirits; the *earth* and *sea* serve such like uses, as the *paunch* and *bladder* in a living creature; and the *moon* placed between the sun and the earth, as the *liver* or some other soft entrail between the heart and

² *Plut. de Stoic. Repugn.* p. 153. B. Vol. II.

² *Cud. Intell. Syst.* chap. iv. p. 532.

“ the

“ the belly, transmits down thither the heat,
 “ and draws round about her the vapours,
 “ which arise from hence, subtilizing them by
 “ the way of concoction and purification^b.”

But some perhaps might better like the description which *Serapis* gave of himself in this manner :

Ἐμὶ θεὸς τοῖόςδε μαθεῖν, οἷόν κ' ἐγὼ εἶπω
 Οὐρανὸν ὅλον κόσμον κεφαλῇ, γαστὴρ δὲ θάλασσα,
 Γαῖα δέ μοι πόδες ἐστὶ, τὰ δ' ἕατ' ἐν αἰθέρι
 κείται,

Ὅμμα τέ τηλαυγὲς λαμπρὸν φάος ἡλίοιο^c.

To conclude; the *Stoicks*, as I have before hinted, do not seem to differ from *Pythagoras* in their opinion about the nature of God and of rational souls; only they deny the immortality of human souls, and indeed of all intelligences whatsoever, except their chief God, fire or æther : for they hold an universal conflagration, and teach that the whole world, bodies, souls, all things, shall be consumed by fire, and resolve into that which is called God, their first cause. Upon this article *Plutarch* expresses himself in this manner; “ *Cbrysippus*, says he,
 “ and *Cleanthes* having filled, as one may say,
 “ heaven, earth, air, and sea, with gods, have
 “ not yet made any one of all these gods in-
 “ corruptible or eternal, except *Jupiter* alone,
 “ in whom they consume all the rest; so that
 “ in him to consume is nothing better than to

^b *Plut. de Cic. Lunar.* p. 92.

^c *Macrobius Saturn. Lib. I.*
 cap. xx. p. 245.

“ *be consumed*. For it is an *infirmity*, both to
 “ *perish* by being resolved into another; and
 “ to be saved by being nourished by the *reso-*
 “ *lution* of others into himself. Now these are
 “ not like other of their absurdities, gathered
 “ by argument from their suppositions, or drawn
 “ by consequence from their doctrines; but
 “ they themselves proclaiming it aloud in their
 “ writings concerning the gods, providence,
 “ fate, and nature, expressly say that all the
 “ gods were born and shall die by fire, melting
 “ away in their opinion, as if they were *wax*
 “ or *tin*^d.” Then indeed — *Jovis omnia ple-*
na. This, however, does not make a final end
 or prove an utter extinction of the world; it
 only serves to introduce a renovation of the uni-
 verse: when this same complexion of things
 shall again rise up as at the beginning, and the
 same persons come again in the same order
 upon the stage, to act over again the same cha-
 racters, and to succeed one another in the
 same series of events; till the world shall again
 arrive at that particular period, when the uni-
 versal conflagration shall again take place, and
 introduce another renovation. And after this
 manner shall there be within a certain space, a
 perpetual *rising* and *falling* of this world, a
 continued *restoration* of the same persons and
 things to eternity. Nor can it possibly happen
 otherwise, for that the universe in the whole,

^d *Plut. adwer. Stoic.* p. 1075. Vol. II.

and in all its several parts, is absolutely in the power of a *fatal necessity*.

* *Nemes. de Nat. Hom. cap. xxviii. sub fin. Tatian. Orat. ad Græc. cap. 5.*

But to give a later instance of the power of human reason, in conceiving the formation of the world, let me observe how Mr. *Glanville* explains the general restitution, which upon the principles of philosophy he apprehends will happen after the conflagration of the earth.

“ Those *thick, says he, and clammy vapours, which erst- while ascended in such vast measures, and had filled the vault of heaven with smoak and darkness, must at length obey the laws of their nature and gravity, and so descend again in abundant showers, and mingle with the subsiding ashes, which will constitute a mud vegetative and fertile.* For those warm and benign beams, that now again begin to visit the desolate earth, will excite those *seminal principles* into action, which the divine goodness and wisdom hath mingled with all things. Wherefore they operating according to their natures, and the dispositions they find in the restored matter, will shoot forth in all sorts of *flowers, herbs, and trees; making the whole earth a garden of delight and pleasure; and erecting all the phenomena proper to this element.*” *Glanwill's Lux Orient. chap. xiv. p. 142.*

“ But who shall be the common *seeds-man* of succeeding humanity, when all mankind is swept away by the *fiery deluge*? To take sanctuary in a *miracle* is *unphilosophical* and desperate. I think therefore, it is not improbable (I mean according to the *duct* of this *hypothesis*) but that in this *renewed youth* of the so lately *calcined and purified earth, there may be some pure efflorescences of balmy matter, not to be found in its exhausted and decrepit age, that may be proper vehicles of life, into which souls may descend without further preparations; and so orderly shape and form them, as we see to this day several sorts of other creatures do, without the help of generation.* For doubtless there will be great plenty of *unctuous spirituous matter, when the most inward and recalcitrant spirits of all things shall be dislodg'd from their old close residences, and scatter'd in the air, where they will at length, when the fierce agitation of the fire is over, gather in considerable proportions of tenuous vapours; which at length descending in a crystalline liquor, and mingling with the finest parts of the newly modifi'd earth, will doubtless compose as genial a matter as any can be prepar'd in the bodies of animals.* And the calm and *wholesome*

T

WE

WE come now to examine into *Aristotle's* sentiments about the first cause or author of motion. And it may reasonably be expected, that, if *any where*, one shall meet with the existence of an *infinite mind* among the avowed opinions of this philosopher. He judges those philosophers guilty of great absurdity, who went about to explain the formation of the universe upon one principle *only*, without enquiring into the origin of motion. And no less absurd did he judge those other philosophers, who, introducing more principles than one, assigned the *efficiency* to *fire*, or to any thing of that nature. "After such philosophers, and such principles, quite unequal to the production of things, people, *says he*, being constrained by truth itself, sought after the principle which I shall mention immediately. For as there is no likeli-

"air, which now is duly purged
"from its noxious *reeks* and *va-*
"pours, and abounds with their
"saline spirituous humidity, will
"questionless be very propitious
"to those tender *inchoations* of
"life; and by the help of the
"sun's favourable and gentle
"beams, supply them with all
"necessary materials.

"Nor need we puzzle our-
"selves to fancy, how those
"*Terra Filii*, those young sons
"of the earth will be fortified
"against the injuries of *wea-*
"ther, or be able to provide
"for themselves in their first
"and tender *infancy*, since
"doubtless, if the supposition
"be admitted, those immediate

"births of *unassisted* nature will
"not be so *tender* and *helpless*
"as we, into whose very con-
"stitutions, delicacy, and effe-
"minateness is now twisted,
"*&c.*" *Id. ibid.* p. 146.

These are sentiments, which Mr. *Glanvill* seems to apprehend are suggested to one's mind from natural light or philosophy. In his *preface*, he says, that *this scheme is built upon the principles of mere reason and philosophy*. And that there- in he kept himself to the conduct of those principles which he judged most rational. No inconsiderable proof of the Insufficiency of human reason with respect to matters of religion!

"hood

“ hood that the formation of the universe,
 “ and the commodious situation of its parts, is
 “ owing to *fire*, or *earth*, or any cause of such
 “ a nature; so neither is it likely, that those
 “ who professed these opinions, did really believe
 “ them. Nor can so great a work be attribut-
 “ ed to chance or fortune. So that if a man
 “ should affirm, that a *mind* in nature, *after*
 “ *the manner* it is in animals, is the cause of the
 “ world, and of all its beauty and order, he
 “ should appear sober in comparison to ancient
 “ philosophers, who vented only idle conceits^f.”

Thus *Aristotle* with these sentiments seems to be in a fair way to make one step farther, and to declare expressly for an *infinite mind*. And what renders his case still more promising, he was of a strong *genius*, and of great application; he was mighty fond of the study of *causes* and *effects*, and particularly examined into the *first cause* of motion; nor did he want ingenuity and acuteness to enable him to pursue the most abstracted speculations. Nay, amidst all these advantages, he was not ignorant, that *Anaxagoras* had many years before him, introduced an infinite mind in the formation of the universe: and this very doctrine had he frequently heard taught and explained by his master *Plato*, under whom he studied for the space of *twenty* years. So that, I say, *if any where*, one may expect to meet with the notion of an *infinite mind*, improved and established among the

^f *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iii. p. 843. E. Vol. II.*

opinions of this penetrating philosopher. And we shall now consider, what his sentiments were in relation to this article; nor need we be long in the examination.

EVERY body knows, that *Aristotle* by his subtle reasoning, which in many instances he carried beyond all bounds and quite overstrained, argued himself into a persuasion, that the universe had no beginning, will never have an end, but is every way *eternal*. He does not indeed apprehend the world in the same light, wherein *Xenophanes* and others conceived it. He reports, there is one eternal first mover, upon whom depends all the other *existences*, not for their being and perfections, but for their motions and revolutions: and this eternal first mover, he is pleased to distinguish by the name of the *first* or *supreme* God. His scheme seems to be this:

“ HE conceives, and pretends to prove, that
 “ motion must have existed from eternity; and
 “ without intermission shall continue for ever.
 “ And as one cannot apprehend motion, without conceiving things that are moved; so
 “ in the conceit of the eternity of motion,
 “ he is naturally led to declare, that the whole
 “ universe is eternal, without beginning and
 “ end^b. Indeed all the several parts of this
 “ eternal system of things are not equally intitled to an endless duration. The individuals
 “ of the different kinds or *species* of beings

^a *Id. Phys.* Lib. VIII. cap. i. p. 452. D. and cap. vi. p. 459. p. 407. Vol. I. E. Vol. I.

^b *Id. de Cael.* Lib. II. cap. i.

“ here

“ here below, are changeable, fleeting, and
 “ mortal; whilst the kinds or *species* themselves,
 “ shall last and continue for ever. But the
 “ *heavens* above, being of a quite different na-
 “ ture, purer and more perfect than *earth*, *fire*,
 “ *air*, or *water*, *they* in all respects are incor-
 “ ruptible and eternal, and are therefore by the
 “ universal consent of mankind, esteemed to
 “ be the habitation of the Godsⁱ.

“ MEAN while, however this universe, in all
 “ the various motions wherein we observe it,
 “ is eternal; yet of necessity, it must be al-
 “ lowed, there is a *first mover*, who is eternal.
 “ For in no instance, can there be a pro-
 “ gression *in infinitum* without arriving to a first
 “ cause^k. Nor are we to imagine, there are
 “ more than *one first mover*; since more are
 “ altogether needless^l. And as this one eternal
 “ first mover does not move by any external
 “ force or impulse, nor yet by accident, but *of*
 “ *himself* (motion, as he is a mover, being his
 “ very nature and essence) so remaining simple
 “ and invariable, and in the same course, he
 “ moves in one simple and uniform motion;
 “ that is to say, his motion proceeds not in a
 “ *strait* line, but in an *orb*, or it is *circular*,
 “ which is the *primary* motion, of all others
 “ the most perfect, and *that* alone which can
 “ prove perpetual and uniform; while other

ⁱ *Id. de Cael* Lib. I. cap. ii. p. 399. C. cap. ii.

p. 433. B. 434. E. Lib. II.
 cap. i. p. 452.

^l *Id. ibid.* Lib. VIII. cap. vii.

p. 418.

^k *Id. Physic.* Lib. VII. cap. i.

“ things that move otherwise are variable and
 “ inconstant^m. And indeed this first mover
 “ is immoveable, being free from all external
 “ change; and notwithstanding his *orbicular*
 “ motion, may be said to be at rest; for that
 “ he always possesses the same placeⁿ. In short
 “ this one eternal first mover, is the uppermost
 “ *sphere* in heaven, upon which originally de-
 “ pend all the other motions in the universe.
 “ We are not however to imagine, that this
 “ sphere is only *magnitude*; no, it is animated,
 “ or contains a being who is indivisible, with-
 “ out all parts and magnitude, who is *properly*
 “ immortal, the *first mover* and the *supreme*
 “ *God*^o.

“ Thus having pointed out the first mover,
 “ and explained, that he is an eternal substance
 “ or being, immoveable in himself, and with-
 “ out all parts and magnitude it may now
 “ be asked, *whether is there only one eternal be-*
 “ *ing, in himself immoveable, without parts and*
 “ *magnitude, or are there more than one; and*
 “ *how many such beings are there?* That there
 “ are more eternal beings than one, immoveable
 “ in themselves, and without parts and mag-
 “ nitude, who are likewise concerned in the
 “ production of motion, is evident from the
 “ several eternal motions of the *planets*; by

^m *Id. Physic. cap. v. p. 415.*

cap. viii. p. 418. cap. ii. p. 426.

C. cap. xiii.

ⁿ *Id. ibid. cap. vii. p. 418.*

cap. xiv. p. 427.

^o *Id. ibid. cap. xv. p. 430. B.*

C. & de Cael. Lib. I. cap. ix.

p. 445. C. Lib. II. cap. iii.

p. 454. D.

“ whose

“ whose order in the heavens, the rank of
 “ those beings is to be settled. But to deter-
 “ mine particularly, how many such beings
 “ there are belongs to *astronomy*, which will
 “ shew us what is the particular number of
 “ *spheres* in the heavens; every one of which
 “ must be animated by an eternal substance or
 “ being, in itself immoveable, and without all
 “ parts and magnitude.

“ Now the *first mover*, and *these other eter-*
 “ *nal* beings thus explained, are the *only true*
 “ *Gods*, that have been hitherto handled down
 “ from one generation to another. And all
 “ other accounts concerning the gods, are mere
 “ *fiction* and *imposture*, invented to serve *poli-*
 “ *tical purposes*.”

So that according to *Aristotle*, there being in the heavens so many spheres or orbs perpetually revolving, each of these spheres is animated by a mind that directs its motions, or is the cause of its revolutions: and the mind that animates the *highest* sphere, which communicates motion to the rest, or is the first eternal mover, is the supreme God, whom they sometimes call, from his place or station, *the extremity of heaven*.” Thus we see that *Aristotle’s* supreme God is circumscribed to an orb or sphere, or animates a limited body, which by its revolving from eternity propagates motion to all the other parts of the universe.

It is true, *Aristotle* sometimes alledges, that

p *Arist. Metaph.* Lib. XIV. q *Sext. Empir. Pyrrh. Hypot.*
 cap. vi. p. 1000. A. & cap. iii. Lib. III. cap. xxiv. p. 155. C.

the minds or intelligences, which move the *spheres*, are without all body, and have no *animal* union with any matter whatever. But as this looks like a contradiction to what, one should think, is his fixed opinion; so perhaps, it ought not to be regarded. However *commentators* have been at great pains, and have taken various ways to reconcile *Aristotle* to himself: and the best that seems to be made of it, is this account of the matter, namely, "*Aristotle* imagines, that besides the minds that animate the spheres, there are as many intelligences of a superior rank and order, that have each of them the superintendency of one particular sphere, and who serve as so many distinct *patterns*, to be severally imitated in their thoughts and perfections, by the several embodied minds in the revolving of their orbs." And when this is gone into, all the alteration that can happen in the present article, is this, *viz. that particular intelligence* (not who animates, but) *who superintends the biggest sphere is the supreme God.*

UPON all which, I leave the reader to judge, whether *Aristotle* amidst all the promising advantages he was master of, had any notion of an *infinite mind*, whose being and perfections make up an essential article of natural religion? *Atticus*, a *Platonick* philosopher in the reign of *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, condemns *Aristotle's* philosophy in several instances: But with respect to his sentiments about the deity, he

he reckons him no better than *Epicurus**. For my part, I cannot but judge, that *Aristotle's* shameful blunders in this article are an everlasting reproach to human powers, in the matter of discovering the being and perfections of *that God, whom Jews and Christians do all confess, and whom every good man must love and adore.*

I NEED examine no further. We are now sufficiently apprized of the success, which ancient philosophers, of the greatest Reputation, met withal in their enquiries into the origin and formation of the universe. Those who professed *only* one first cause of all things, are some of them of opinion, that this cause is *infinite matter*; others conjecture, it is *water*; a third sort alledge, it is *fire*; while a fourth contend it is *air*. Nor do any of these philosophers seem to have been aware of this question, *Who is the author of motion, or from whence did motion take its rise?* But other philosophers, who professed one cause not sufficient to the production and formation of the universe, introduced some of them *two* causes; and others, *four*: and in this view of things, they attribute the *efficiency*, or the power of motion, to *fire* or *æther*, or to some *attractive* and *repelling* power or properties inherent to matter. Indeed these opinions did not pass among philosophers without being debated. But those who opposed them, were so far from advancing any thing

* Vid. *Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. XV. cap. v. p. 799. D.*

more reasonable towards explaining the origin of motion, that they denied motion altogether: and *Aristotle* himself declares against motion's having any original, and roundly affirms, it is *eternal*. So that in all their enquiries, they never arrive at any the least suspicion of the existence of an infinite mind.

THEY talk indeed of God, as *one eternal being*, the *first cause* and author of all things. But these expressions, as one may easily judge from what I have before hinted, do in the mouths of ancient philosophers bear a meaning, quite different from *that* wherein we now understand them^f. As for me, I cannot well

^f Je vous laisse à juger présentement, si nos modernes, qui à l'exemple des anciens peres, ont recueilli les endroits, où les païens parlent d'un Dieu, ont agi avec toute la justesse de discernement que la bonne foi demande.

Croiez-vous qu'il soit permis de se prevaloir du temoignage de ceux, qui s'expriment comme nous, mais qui ont des idées fort différentes de nôtres, où qui n'entendent point ce qu'ils disent, & n'en voient pas les absurditez? Se vouloir parler & fortifier de sufrage de ces gens-là, c'est imiter, ce me semble, les avarés qui cherchent à s'enrichir par toutes sortes de moïens, *per fas & nefas*. Voilà des païens, me direz vous, qui n'ont reconu qu'un principe de toutes choses. Cela ne suffit pas, vous répondrai-je. Les

Spinozistes ne parlent pas autrement. Il faut savoir de plus, quelle est la nature qu'ils assignent à ce principe. L'exemtent-ils de toute composition, le separent-ils, le distinguent-ils, ou de la forme, ou de la matiere du monde? S'ils ne le font pas, je les trouve aussi absurdes & aussi polytheïstes réellement que le fauroient être les *Homeres* & les *Hesodes*. *Continuat. des Pens. Divers.* chap. lxvi. p. 336.

Aristæus is of opinion, that religion cannot restrain mankind from being vicious, unless they be persuaded, that God is an incorporeal being. And he counts it impious to alledge, that it is of no consequence to a virtuous life whether one apprehends God to be material or no. Mr. Bayle, indeed, does not go along with this famous Civilian in his way of managing this argument: But he apprehend

apprehend wherein *Leucippus*, *Democritus*, and *Epicurus* were guilty of greater absurdity in their account of the origin and formation of the world, than these philosophers were, whose opinions I have been hitherto explaining. *Leucippus*, as some people think, first introduced the doctrine of *atoms*, and gave out *plenum* and *vacuum*, *body* and *space*, as the first principles of all things, without ever offering to enquire into the origin of motion^t. *Democritus* seems to have observed nothing deficient in the sentiments of *Leucippus*^v. But *Epicurus* finding it necessary to make

makes these reflections, and brings the matter to the same conclusion:

Si nôtre jurisconsulte, *says he*, s'étoit contenté de dire, qu'en raisonnant conséquemment on ne se persuaderoit jamais qu'une nature corporelle puisse savoir ce que nous pensons, je me rangerois à son avis. Il me semble que la religion des païens, ce qu'ils disoient de la providence, leur crainte de la justice divine, leur esperance de faveurs d'en-haut, étoient des choses qui ne couloient point de leur doctrine touchant la nature de Dieu. Je parle même de la doctrine des philosophes sur ce grand point. Cette doctrine bien pénétrée, & conduite exactement de conséquence en conséquence, étoit l'éponge de toute religion. Ibid. chap. cxli. p. 709.

^t *D. Laert. in Leucip. p. 244.*
F. This doctrine of *atoms* was known to the world long before *Lucippus*. *Strabo* and *Sext.*

tus Empiricus tell us from *Posidonius*, that it was taught by one *Moschus* a *Phœnician*, who lived before the *Trojan* war. And since *Jamblichus* informs us, that *Pythagoras* in his travels had intercourse with the prophets, who were the successors of this *Moschus* or *Moschus*, we may reasonably believe, that from them he learned the doctrine of *atoms*; that he brought it into *Greece*, and gave them out as *νοητὰ σώματα*, bodies perceivable only by the mind, or as *monads* that have magnitude, as has been before hinted. The conceit some people have, that this *Moschus* the *Phœnician* is the same with the *Jewish Moses* seems to be groundless. *Strab. Lib. XVI. p. 757. D. Sext. Emp. adv. M. Lib. VIII. p. 367. D. Jamb. de Vit. Pythag. cap. iii.*

^v *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iv. p. 845. A.*

one step further, he pretends to enquire into the origin of motion, and derives it from the *gravitation* of their *atoms*, which he conceives to be a property as essential to matter, as either figure or magnitude*. And I say, I am apt to think, that the accounting for the formation of the universe in this manner carries in it no greater absurdity, than any one of these opinions before mentioned. They all appear to me, to be at much the same distance from expressing any notion of an *infinite mind*. And it cannot but move one's pity to reflect, that the greatest *hero* in *Tully*, who joins in the overthrow of the doctrines of *Epicurus*, who strenuously defends the cause of religion, and says so many fine things, *which may well be applied to an infinite mind*, should conceive of God no otherwise, but as a *material fire* pervading the world, which by its penetrating heat, its kindly warmth diffused through the whole, brings forth and produces all things, as their several natures, independently of any being whatever, in themselves are adapted. Nor do I know any one philosopher, if you except *Anaxagoras*, *Socrates*, and his followers, that seems to entertain better sentiments.

CICERO affords us a most melancholly account of the opinions of ancient philosophers about a deity. He observes in general, that
 “ among many articles in philosophy, which
 “ have not as yet been sufficiently explained,

* *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.* Lib I. cap. iii. p. 877. E. Vol. II.

“ the

“ the question concerning the nature of the
“ Gods, is *most difficult and very obscure*. Upon
“ this head, *says he*, the opinions of the most
“ learned men are so various, and differ so
“ widely from one another, that the *Acade-*
“ *micks* must be thought to act a prudent part,
“ when they with-hold their assent from mat-
“ ters of such uncertainty: for what is meaner
“ than rashness? and what so rash, or so un-
“ becoming the gravity and steadiness of a wise
“ man, as to embrace a false opinion, or to de-
“ fend without *doubting*, what one does not
“ thoroughly perceive and understand? As here
“ in the present question: many affirm *there*
“ *are Gods*; which indeed is most likely, and
“ we are all led naturally to think so. But on
“ the other hand *Pythagoras* is *doubtful*: And
“ *Diagoras Melius* with *Theodorus Cyrenaicus*
“ say expressly, *there are none*. Nay those very
“ persons, who profess there are Gods, are of
“ so many various and contrary opinions, that
“ it would be a hard task to number them.
“ For many things are set forth concerning the
“ shape and figure of the Gods, their places,
“ their abodes, their course of life, or what
“ they are doing. And among philosophers
“ all these articles are keenly debated. But
“ the life and soul of the question is, *whether*
“ *there are the Gods quite idle, meddling with*
“ *nothing, and wholly withdrawn from all care*
“ *and government? Or did they at first form and*
“ *dispose all things, and do they continue, through*
“ *an*

“ *an infinite duration, to move and direct them?*
 “ Here the debate is particularly violent: and
 “ unless a man comes to be settled in this
 “ point, he is necessarily involved in great er-
 “ rors, and remains ignorant of things of the
 “ highest moment. For there are, and have
 “ been philosophers, who apprehend, that the
 “ Gods are quite indifferent to mankind, and
 “ take no sort of care of human affairs. Which,
 “ if true, must put an end to all religion and
 “ piety.” In a word, says *Cicero*, the great
 “ dissension that prevails among men of the
 “ best learning, about so important a matter,
 “ throws those very persons into suspense and
 “ doubting, who imagined they had arrived to
 “ some certainty.”

THUS ancient philosophers, not being able to
 discover the being and perfections of the *one,*
only living, and true God, they were forced to
 take up with *their own vain imaginations*; where-
 in, as it must always happen in such circum-
 stances, they violently opposed and contradic-
 ted one another, and, as *Xenophon* observes, *were*
like so many madmen^a. In this article, we have
 a lively description of the real state of mankind
 from *Atbanasius*: “ When men, *says he,* had
 “ rashly and perversely called off their facul-
 “ ties from the intuition and study of the
 “ nature and perfections of the one true God,

^y *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I.*
 cap. i. ii.

^z *Id. ibid. cap. vi.*

^a *Xenoph. Memorab. Lib. I.*
 p. 710. B. Vid. *Euseb. Prep.*
Evang. Lib. XIV. cap. ii.

“ they

“ they knew not where to settle or fix; they
“ were driven and scattered, as you may suppose
“ a numerous fleet would be in a storm, every
“ ship of which had thrown her compass over
“ board; some stranded upon one barbarous
“ coast, and some upon another. — The same
“ misapprehension beset them, as would hap-
“ pen to men that should grow sick of the sun,
“ and take an aversion to the comfort of light,
“ and therefore should bury themselves alive,
“ make themselves subterraneous habitations,
“ dig mazes and meanders of walks, and exer-
“ cise and enjoy themselves in the darkness of
“ them. The event is visible and obvious.
“ They would never know where they are;
“ they would sometimes jostle, and be, at o-
“ ther times, out of one another’s hearing; and
“ their fancies would persuade them, that they
“ see persons and things which they do not;
“ and that those that are very near them are
“ a great way off, or (to use that more com-
“ pendious expression of scripture) *seeing they*
“ *would not see.* Thus our progenitors fancy’d
“ themselves surfeited with the brightness and
“ glory of the divine presence, and having put
“ out their eyes, rather than they would any
“ longer behold it, their darkened powers grop’d
“ their way, and could keep no path, nor di-
“ rect their motion to any point, and, like a
“ drunken man, fancy’d they saw and found
“ and laid hold on objects, which had no
“ being in nature, and were only the paint-
ing

“ing of a warm imagination^b.”

I MUST here in a particular manner, express myself greatly surprized, that *Cicero* in writing two dialogues, on purpose to debate and explain the nature of the Gods, introduces no personage to profess and maintain the existence of an *infinite mind*; but employs *Velleius* to defend the doctrine of *Epicurus*; *Lucilius Balbus* to support that of the *Stoicks*; and *Cotta*, an *Academick*, to overthrow them both, without offering to establish any other opinion whatsoever! *Cicero* well knew, that the doctrine of an *infinite mind*, first introduced by *Anaxagoras*, was taught by *Socrates* and *Plato*, two philosophers whom he deservedly admires. And is it not mighty strange, that he takes no farther notice of this opinion, than to make *Velleius* propose it, except against it, and leave it condemned among other opinions, the most absurd and extravagant! What can one conjecture was the cause of this conduct? Is it possible, that a man of *Cicero's* great genius, of his high improvements, possessed of all the learning of ancient philosophers, a *bigot* to no sect, and capable of distinguishing things with great exactness; is it possible, that such a man should ever come to think, that the existence of an *infinite mind*, is no better than an *absurdity*, like other opinions among most philosophers, and can as little be defended? I violently suspect, that so the case

^b *Parker's* translation, (or rather *oration* against the gentiles, *ther paraphrase*) of *Athanasius's* p. 298.

stands

stands with our great *Roman* orator and philosopher;

*Os dignum æterno tinctum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum; cui sordida monstra
Prætulit, & liquidam temeravit crimine vocem.*

Prudent.

Anaxagoras primus omnium rerum descriptionem & modum, mentis infinitæ vi ac ratione designari & confici voluit: This is the doctrine which *Cicero* leaves to the mercy of *Epicurus*. Another melancholy proof of the insufficiency of human powers to discover the being and perfections of *our God*! In short, *Cicero* having made *Cotta* overthrow all that *Balbus* had said in defence of the Gods and a providence; he apprehends it decent to introduce him offering his *apology* in this manner: "By what I have hitherto argued, I do not mean, *says Cotta*, to extirpate the belief which people have conceived about the nature of Gods; but only to let you see, how obscure the question is, and with what difficulties it is attended^d." And as for himself, having observed that *Cotta's* reasoning seemed juster to *Velleius* the *Epicurean*, he says, that for his part, he is of opinion, that the argument maintained by *Balbus* has greater appearance of truth in it^e. That is to say, *Cicero* apprehends that the opinion of *Stoicks*, wherein they represent God as a material or mechanical fire pervading the universe, is of all

^e *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. cap. xi.*

^d *Id. ibid. Lib. III. cap. xxxix.*

^e *Id. ibid. cap. xl.*

other the most probable! To this I shall only add, that in the Days of *Cicero*, the particular schemes of philosophy, which were of *esteem*, were only the *Epicurean*, the *Academick*, the *Stoick*, and the *Peripatetick*^f: which are *all four infinitely far* from affording us any view of the *great author of the universe*.

THUS we see, that however now a days, in the study of natural philosophy, a man with great ease, may clearly demonstrate the being and perfections of God; yet true it is *in fact*, that the enquiries of ancient philosophers did never lead them to apprehend the existence of such a being. One may reckon, that the shame they conceived in the matter of the *fabulous theology* of the *poets*, (which was every where the religion of the vulgar) would engage them to *do all they could*, since they thought not fit to reject it, to set it in a light, that should in some measure stand to reason: And indeed for this purpose, they stretched their invention to the utmost. But however they lay aside its natural meaning, and make it bear a *metaphorical* sense; yet in all their most refined explications, they are so far from apprehending *any immaterial being whatsoever*, far less an *infinite mind*, to be pointed at, that they rise no higher than the *heavenly bodies*, or the different *elements* of the universe^g. It is true, *Porphry* seems to report this *fabulous theology*, as *mystically* bearing in

^f *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. cap. vii.*

^g *Id. ibid. Lib. II. cap. xxiv, xxvii.*

it a supreme mind, and other immaterial intelligent beings. But as this sort of interpretation is altogether foreign to the intention of the authors of the theology itself, goes beyond their notions of things, and brings forth a *new world* whereof they were quite ignorant, so it happened to be introduced, not only long after *Plato's ideas* and intellectual substances; but so late as near *three hundred* years after the revelation of the gospel, when the being and perfections of an infinite mind, and the existence of purely spiritual beings, were set in a strong light, and the vanity of the *heathen theology* was laid open to the world^b. “ These strange discoveries, says Mr. Pope, which *Porphyry* and “ the rest would have to pass for the genuine “ *theology* of the *Greeks*, prove but (as *Eusebius* “ tells us) the perverting the fables into a *mystick* “ sense. They did indeed often defend “ *Homer*, but then they allegorized away the “ Gods by doing so. What the world took “ for substantial objects of adoration, dissolved “ before its eyes into a figurative meaning, a “ moral truth, or a piece of learning which “ might equally correspond to any religion; and “ the learned had left themselves nothing to “ worship, when they came to find an object “ in *christianity*ⁱ.” So that, I say, however ancient philosophers were deeply concerned to search out and vindicate the truth of things;

^b *Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. III. per tot.*

ⁱ *Essay on Homer, § 2. p. 39.*

yet, in fact, they never were able to discern the being of an infinite mind.

ON the contrary, the accounts they give us of the origin and formation of things, are so mean, so contemptible, so absurd and ridiculous, that a severer satyr, a more bitter invective against the *sufficiency* of human powers to discover the being of God, can no where be met withal: Nor can any thing afford a stronger proof, that, *to men left to their own understanding, the deity is unsearchable and past finding out*^k. A man indeed may blush to have published the sentiments of his fellows upon this article, they so openly expose the pitiful blunders and weaknesses of human nature^l. But when matters of fact are truly represented, we then distinguish things in their proper light, and come thereby to have our judgment rightly formed and directed.

AND when we find, that those very philosophers, who made it their business to search out the *first cause* and origin of the world, did never in all their enquiries come to perceive the existence of an *infinite mind*; how can one pos-

^kÆdificium autem hujus universi, structura sua, intellectui humano contemplanti instar labyrinthi; ubi tot ambigua viarum, tam fallaces rerum & signorum similitudines, tam obliquæ & implexæ naturarum spiræ, & nodi, undequaque se ostendunt; iter autem sub incerto sensus lumine, interdum affulgente, interdum se condente, per experientiæ & rerum particularium sylvas perpetuo

faciendum est. Quin etiam duces itineris (ut dictum est) qui se offerunt, & ipsi implicantur, atque errorum & errantium numerum augent. In rebus tam duris de judicio hominum ex vi propria, aut etiam de felicitate fortuita, desperandum est. Neque enim ingeniorum quantacunque excellentia, neque experiendi alea sæpius repetita, ista vincere queat. *Nov. Organ. Præf.*

^lVoit-on que les païens sibly

sibly imagine, that *rude uncultivated man* shall be able to make the discovery? It is well observed by *Cicero*; *people*, says he, *don't examine into the causes of those things that are familiar and accustomed to them*^m. And indeed, *plowmen* are not very apt to search into the natural causes of *vegetations*, and by what hidden laws the propagation and growth of their *corns* proceed. These are things, that go on in a common course of events, without peoples troubling their heads about the secret springs or causes that produce them. And I verily believe that mankind in the circumstances wherein I have supposed them, will as little ever come to bethink themselves of assigning an *efficient cause* of the universe, or of the being and motions of sun, moon and stars. “ We are easily satisfied, says “ *Dr. Cheyne*, we and our immediate parents

n'ont jamais eu de système de religion, ou de théologie, qui eût quelque ordre, ou quelque rapport dans ses parties. Tout y montre l'aveuglement, la fureur, & la contradiction : & je soutiens que s'il y avoit des esprits qui ne conussent l'homme que par sa définition d'*animal raisonnable*, & nullement par l'histoire de ses faits, il seroit impossible de leur persuader que les livres d'*Arnobé*, de *Clement d'Alexandrie*, de *Tertullien*, de *St. Augustin*, de *Firminus Maternus*, &c. contre le paganisme, ont été écrits contre une religion actuellement établie dans le monde. Ils diroient que cela ne se peut pas, que ce sont des

fictiones & des romans, des livres faits à plaisir par des personnes oiseuses qui s'étoient formé des grotesques & des monstres dans leur esprit pour s'amuser ensuite à les renverser. Car quelle apparence, que des créatures douées de raison n'établissent pas leurs cultes sur des dogmes & des jugemens bien suivis & bien liés ensemble, au lieu des ces absurditez, qui se détruissent elles mêmes à vue d'œil dans le système du paganisme? Cependant, il n'est que trop vrai à la honte de l'homme. *Bayl. Pensées Diverses*. chap. cxxiv. p. 359.

^m *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. cap. xxxiii.*

“ have not been for ever; but few of us go
 “ farther; we take this world as we find it,
 “ without troubling our heads who made it, or
 “ whether it was made or not.” And should
 the *multitude*, beyond all probability, undertake
 the difficult enquiry, we may easily foresee the
 event, from the success that attended all sects
 of philosophers, in their researches of this na-
 ture°.

° *Cheyne Philosoph. Princip. of Relig. chap. iii. § 1.*

Lord *Herbert* confesses that philosophical enquiries are beyond the reach of the *multitude*. So that the best he pretends to make of the extent of human knowledge, in the bulk of mankind with relation to the deity, is but very inconsiderable; it is really *nothing*, and can only shew us, that poor mortals *have great need of foreign instruction or revelation*.

Hæ de mundi origine opiniones inter philosophos solum jactatae, vulgi captum superabant: satis quippe habebat populus, res ab omni ævo comparatas fuisse, ut heic commodè degere possent, modo industriam adhiberent; cætera plerumque securi: nisi quod dum vim quandam internam, vel Deum in hoc mundo agentem conspexerant, ejus in potestate esse existimabant, ut vel vitæ commoda illis adimeret, vel illos commodis. Hanc igitur vim latentem, sive numen, rerum omnium, quarum causas ignorabant, auctorem facile facie-

bant; quem tamen pro dimenso ingenii illorum, ubi aperte requirerent, *irritus fere cessit labor*; neque aliud inter illos plerumque constitit, quam quod ab abdito illo, sed summo certe principio, omnia quovis dimanassent ævo; quin penes ejus arbitrium esse, an res ita stent, steterintve: huic igitur Deo cum primis supplicandum, tum ut mala averteret, tum ut bona quævis largiretur; ita ut ministri ejus præcipui neglectui non haberentur. *Herb. de Relig. Gentil. cap. xiii. p. 160.*

° *Remarkable is the case of Simonides: and that of other learned men is no better. Quid? says Cæcilius, Simonidis Melici nonne admiranda omnibus, & sectanda cunctatio? Qui Simonides, cum de eo, quid, & quales arbitraretur Deos, ab Hierone tyranno quæreretur, primo deliberationi diem petiit, postridie biduum prorogavit, mox alterum tantum admonitus adjunxit; postremo cum causas tantæ moræ tyrannus inquireret, respondit ille, quod sibi, quanto inquisitio tardior pergeret, tanto*

To

To conclude, methinks I still go upon good ground, when I am further confirmed in my opinion, that *mankind having no foreign instruction, will regard the heavenly bodies, as the great causes they depend on for the necessities and enjoyments of life; and will in consequence hereof, offer up to those beings their most solemn addresses, honouring and supplicating to the sun as the chief deity*, Ἡλιε παντακράτωρ, κόσμου πνεῦμα, κόσμου δύναμις, κόσμου φῶς^r, *without conceiving any suspicion of the existence of an infinite mind*^q. And I cannot but say, that herein, as it seems to me, they would act more naturally than most philosophers^r. As *Menander* says,

Ἡλιε, σὲ γὰρ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν πρῶτον θεῶν,
Δί' ὃν θεωρεῖν ἐστὶ τὰς ἄλλας θεάς.

veritas fieret obscurior. *Minuc. Fel. Octav. cap. xiii. p. 72. Vid. Cicer. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. cap. xxii.*

^p *Macrobi. Saturnal. Lib. I. cap. xxiii. p. 255.*

^q *Germani Deorum numero eos solos ducunt, quos cernunt, & quorum opibus aperte juvantur, Solem, & Vulcanum, & Lunam: reliquos ne fama quidem acceperunt: Cæsar de Bello Gall. Lib. VI. cap. x.*

^r What can be more suited to human nature, when not

able to rise above objects of sense, than this thought? Ὁ ἥλιος θεὸς μέγας ἦν κατ' ἔργον θεῶν, ὃ πάντες ἔκυσιν οἱ ἔργῳι θεοί, ὡσανεὶ βασιλεῖ καὶ δυνάσει. *Mercur. Trismeg. cap. v. § 3.* For as *Clemens Alexandrinus* observes, Ὁ ψεῖς μόνῃ πεπιτυκότες, ἢ ἀσέβων τὰς κυρίως ἐπιθεώμενοι, ἰθαύμασάν τε καὶ ἐξθαύμασαν, θεὸς ἐκ τῶ θεῖν ὀνομάσαντες τὸν ἀσέβητα καὶ προσεκύνοντα ἥλιον, ὡς Ἰνδοί καὶ σελήην, ὡς Φεργες. *Admon. ad Gent. p. 16.*

S E C T. VII.

Those ancient philosophers, who confessed the existence of an infinite mind, had such notions about the origin and formation of the universe, and of particular beings; that it is demonstrably plain, they were not led to the knowledge of the first sovereign cause from the effects he has produced. And as they were of themselves incapable of acquiring this degree of knowledge, so in no instance do they ever seem to undertake to prove the existence of the deity. Far less can it be thought that the bulk of mankind are able to find out this other fundamental article of natural religion, by their own sagacious reasoning.

I HAVE before hinted, that some ancient philosophers *professed the existence of an infinite mind.* And from hence perhaps one may be apt to think, that mankind are able of themselves to make the discovery. But before one can reasonably give into this conclusion, one must first know, by what means those philosophers came to take up this opinion. If indeed they arrived at it, by a natural *series* and connexion of things; or if without all foreign instruction, they were led from the knowledge of
the

the effects to apprehend this first sovereign cause; it must then be allowed, that human powers in those particular philosophers, were able to make the discovery. But should one or more philosophers be able, in a course of accurate inquiries, to search out the being and perfections of God, this, in my apprehension, as I have formerly observed, would render but little service to the cause of the *deists*.

THESE gentlemen, as they are now pleased to give out the argument, (managed by Lord Herbert in the last century) do strongly contend, that all mankind are of themselves capable to find out and perceive the being and perfections of an infinite mind; so as thereby to answer all the great ends and purposes of religion. "Can a religion, *say they*, designed for every one, not be within the reach of every one? Or, can that, which above all things it concerns ALL men to know, not be knowable by ALL?"

id quod

*Æque pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æque;
Æque neglectum pueris senibusque nocebit.*

"And is not the foundation of all religion the believing there is only one self-sufficient being, to whom all others owe their being, and their continuance in being? — And in what point is it, that men of the meanest abilities may not know their duty whether it relates to God or man? As to the first, cannot they tell what sentiments inspire them with love and reverence for the deity?"

IT

It is not therefore sufficient, that some philosophers may come to discover these truths of religion. Every *peasant*, every *mechanick* must be able of himself to discern, *there is a God*, and what perfections belong to his nature. But how does this stand to experience? The *speculation* is wonderfully fine in one's closet, and must gain upon a *recluse* most prodigiously. But coming abroad into the world, do we not *every where* see the clean contrary? I should think, that the account of things above related, puts the *matter of fact* beyond all reasonable dispute. Not to speak of the herd of mankind; do not the most refined and penetrating philosophers, in all their most accurate researches, miss of discovering an infinite mind? And, I say, is not this an undeniable proof, that *in fact that which it concerns ALL men to know, is not knowable by ALL?*

Vous me pourrez objecter que l'on a connu l'unité de Dieu dans les tenebres du paganisme. Je sai que les anciens peres se sont prévalus d'avoir trouvé cette verité dans les écrits de quelques poëtes, & de quelques philosophes paiens. Minucius Felix a cité beaucoup sur cela. Je n'examine point si tous ceux qu'il cite ont reconnu l'unité de Dieu, ou plutôt l'unité de la nature, ou l'unité de l'ame du monde. Mais je ne saurois m'empêcher de faire une observation sur l'avantage qu'il tire de quelques façons de parler, qui étoient fort en usage parmi les paiens: *Dieu est grand, Dieu*

est véritable, si Dieu le veut. Tertullien se sert du même argument: *Hinc ergo tibi anima de conscientia suppetit domi ac foris, nullo irridente vel prohibente prædicare, Deus videt omnia, & Deo commendo, & Deus reddet, & Deus inter nos judicabit.* Cela ne prouve nullement, que ceux qui parloient ainsi confusent l'unité de Dieu: ils pouvoient sans préjudice de leur polytheïsme employer ces phrases. On a de coutume lors même que l'on conçoit une chose comme une espèce, de se servir indifféremment du nombre singulier, ou du pluriel, pour faire entendre ce qui est commun

BUT

BUT if only a few philosophers should be able to discover this essential article of natural religion, since all mankind by this means may come to the knowledge of it, may not one well enough say, it is naturally knowable by all, and

aux individus. C'est ainsi que nous disons, *l'homme est une étrange creature, &c.* Les Crétiens qui croient le plus fermement qu'il y a un très-grand nombre de diables, se servent ordinairement du singulier, *le diable m'emporte, &c.*

Au fond si je vous accorde qu'il y a eu parmi païens quelques grands esprits qui ont reconnu l'unité de Dieu; si, dis-je, je vous l'accorde, mettant à part les erreurs horribles dont ils accompagnoient cette foi, quel usage ferez-vous de leur témoignage? L'oposerez-vous au consentement general que les peuples ont donné au polythéisme? — Je pourrais vous contester ce fait-là, car on peut dire que ceux qui semblent reconnoître cette unité, ont réduit à la seule divinité du soleil tous les autres Dieux du paganisme, ou qu'ils n'ont point admis d'autre Dieu que l'univers même, que la nature, que l'ame du monde. —

Réellement donc les philosophes, qui semblent avoir enseigné l'unité de Dieu, ont été plus polythéistes que le peuple. Ils ne favoient ce qu'ils disoient, s'ils croioient dire que l'unité appartient à Dieu. Elle ne lui peut convenir selon leur dogme, que de la manière qu'il

le convient à l'ocean, à une nation, à une ville, à un palais, à une armée, & à tels autres êtres qui sont *unum per aggregationem*, & que l'on designe par le nombre singulier entendu *collectivement*. Le Dieu qu'ils reconnoissoient étoit un amas d'une infinité de parties. — Il falloit donc qu'ils admissent au pied de la lettre une infinité de Dieux, ou pour le moins un plus grand nombre, qu'il n'y en avoit dans le poëme d'*Hésiode* ni dans aucune Liturgie. —

S'il y a quelques passages qui semblent prouver que des philosophes payens ont reconnu d'une manière plus orthodoxe l'unité de Dieu, ce ne sont la plupart du tems qu'un galimatias pompeux. Faites en bien l'analyse, vous n'y trouverez qu'un Dieu plus puissant que tous les autres, le chef & le souverain des autres. Or cela n'exclut point le polythéisme, car les poëtes, qui en ont été les plus ardens promoteurs, parlent de la supériorité de *Jupiter* en d'aussi forts termes que les *Stoiciens*. Ne vous moqueriez vous pas de ceux qui sous prétexte qu'il n'y a qu'un chef dans un armée, & qu'un roi dans un royaume, soutiendroient qu'il n'y a qu'un homme dans une armée, & dans un royaume? On disoit que *Platon* est celui de
there

there is no need of any other information? This, I must observe, quite alters the state of the question. And all that the *deists* now object, from the goodness of God, and such other *topicks*, to a particular scheme of revelation, may with

tous les anciens philosophes qui s'est le plus approché de l'orthodoxie quant à l'unité de Dieu, néanmoins il admettoit un grand nombre de divinités dignes de nos vœux, de nos sacrifices, & de nôtre adoration ; & s'il raisonneoit conséquemment, il les faisoit *improduites, éternelles, & d'une vertu motrice non communiquée.* Continuat. des Pens. Divers. chap. xxvi. p. 116, &c.

Mr. *Arnauld* examine si les nations, que Dieu avoit laissé marcher dans leurs voyes, ont eu des moïens suffisans pour conôître Dieu & sa loi ; & il considère dans ces peuples, les femmes qui en faisoient la moitié, les soldats, les artisans, & le reste de la populace sans aucune application aux sciences, qui faisoient plus des trois quarts & demi de l'autre moitié. Il soutient qu'ils n'estoient point capables de trouver d'eux mêmes les preuves populaires de l'existence de Dieu createur du monde, dont la loi devoit servir de règle aux actions des hommes, & qu'ainsi ce qu'ils avoient naturellement d'esprit ne leur étoit point un moïen suffisant pour le conôître. Il prouve que par l'instruction des autres, dont la plus ordinaire est celle que les mères donnent à leurs enfans, ils n'ont point pu parvenir à ce degré de lumi-

ère. Vous direz peut-être, ajoutez-il, qu'ils pouvoient estre instruits de l'existence de Dieu par les philosophes, à qui St. Paul témoigne que Dieu avoit découvert sa divinité & ses perfections infinies. Mais, répond-il, " les philosophes n'instruisoient que leurs disciples, & ne parloient point de ces choses à ceux qui ne faisoient point profession d'étudier : Car ce n'étoit pas comme dans la religion Chrétienne, où on fait des sermons à toutes sortes de personnes indifféremment, pour leur apprendre ce qu'ils doivent croire & ce qu'ils doivent faire. Ainsi quelque idée que ces philosophes eussent de la religion, les femmes, & la populace n'en sçavoient que ce qu'ils en voient pratiquer à leurs prêtres & à leurs pontifes : de sorte qu'ils ne connoissoient au lieu du vrai Dieu que des créatures, comme les astres, ou des hommes morts, dont la superstition répandue parmi une infinité de nations avoit fait des Dieux, à quoi on pourroit rapporter ces paroles de *Cicéron*: *superstitio fusa per gentes omnium implevit animos, atque hominum imbecillitatem occupavit.* Ibid. c. liii. p. 242.

equal

equal force and reason, be objected to this particular opinion. Besides, it plainly brings the case to the need or necessity of instruction in matters of religion; which will, unavoidably, introduce a set of *priests*, with all the dreadful consequences, which that hated order of men bring along with them. For the bare proposing of the existence of an infinite mind does not immediately engage mankind, and free the world from all superstition. The doctrine was proposed by *Anaxagoras*; it was embraced by *Socrates* and some of his followers; but all other philosophers despised it, and preferred before it their own absurd notions of the Gods, which, not to speak of *idolatry*, tend to betray men into the *most abject and meanest superstitions*, and perhaps into the *basest, the most barbarous and inhuman practices*. It appears to me, that one great design of the *Jewish* institution was to inspire and maintain in the minds of that nation, just and worthy notions of the being and perfections of the *one only living and true God*. This, as I apprehend, is one main *plot* that runs through the whole of their religion. And how frequently is the comparison stated, in all the strength and elegance of beauty, between the God of the *Jews*, and the Gods of the *nations*? And yet how often do those people lose the impressions of an infinite mind, and basely revolt to the worship of the heavenly bodies; sometimes making their children pass through the fire to *Moloch*?

So

So that, I say, though some philosophers should be able to discover the being and perfections of God; yet a settled course of discipline and instruction seems absolutely necessary for the bulk of mankind*. Which must introduce among *deists* themselves an order of *priests* or *publick teachers*, who, especially upon a *publick establishment no where to be avoided*, may prove as capable as any *Christian priests* ever were, of *corrupting* the plainest truths, of *be-fooling* simple mankind, and *employing* their religious passions as mere engines to bring about their own ambitious purposes, to the great disturbance of human society. And would not this furnish *atheists* with the same sort of *un-lucky* arguments against the being of God; which, alas! *deists* have now access to make use of against the truth of the *gospel*?

* Φιλόσοφον μὲν ἄρα πλῆθος ἄδύνατον εἶναι. *Plat. de Repub. Lib. VI. p. 494. Vol. II.* Ἀναγκάων ἐν σύμπαντι τὰ τῶ ἀνθρώπων γὰρ παιδεία τε καὶ ἀρετή, ἢ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῇ ἐνδαιμονίᾳ ἀπείδουσι. *Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. IV. p. 499.*

* I shall here instance in some particulars, from which one may judge, what sort of religion, it is likely, we should have in the world, and what profound peace the world would enjoy, were people left to the instructions of philosophers, the *men of reason*, who are thought sufficient, without the assistance of revelation, to inform mankind in all things that relate to their highest concerns.

In the first place, one should think it a most obvious truth, that no being whatsoever can *make itself*, or give birth to its own nature. And yet some philosophers have strongly asserted, that *God made himself*, and is the author or cause of his own being. It may, perhaps, be alledged, that by such expressions they only mean to declare, that God is *self-existent*, or that he exists by an absolute necessity of nature. It is not worth while here to enter into the debate. I shall only observe, that the expressions are so very strong, that stronger cannot be used, when a man goes about to maintain, that God

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IN the *interim*, I would fain know, who are those ancient philosophers, who were able to search out the existence of an infinite mind?

produced himself, and is entirely his own work. Thus Plotinus gives it out, that *God is the cause and maker of himself; so that he is a work, but not the work of any other, He is his own work.* See *Cudw. Intell. Syst.* chap. iv. p. 405. And this doctrine Plotinus might have derived from Plato, who tells us that *God made all things, and even himself.* Plat. de Repub. Lib. X. p. 596. C. Vol. II.

Again, we conceive it very plain, that when an intelligent being is about to produce any particular work, he must have in his mind, the notion, the idea, or representation of that work in all its several parts, before he proceeds to execution.

In this manner Plato seems to conceive of the supreme being; and it is thought he is of opinion, that *God being about to make the world, he had the whole plan or design before him, and the particular ideas in his mind of all things whatsoever, that are to be produced in the universe.* Vid. *Attic. ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang.* Lib. XV. cap. xiii. where Plato's doctrine about the divine ideas is counted of the greatest consequence. We know not indeed, what our ideas are, or how they are produced in our mind; and far less can we know, what the *divine ideas* are, or how they exist in the mind of God.

This is a speculation attended with difficulties that are far beyond human comprehension. It is however reasonable and necessary to apprehend, that God conceives the scheme of the universe, and has the ideas of all its particular beings clearly in his mind, before he is pleased to bring them forth, or appoint them a separate existence. Something like this seems to have been first observed by *Socrates* and *Plato*: which, by the way, gives us to understand, that these were the first philosophers, who had any tolerable notion of an infinite mind as concerned in the formation of the universe.

Now this doctrine concerning the *divine ideas* is strangely represented by Plato's followers. They all seem to agree, that these ideas are distinct particular substances or beings, not indeed self-existent, but the productions of the supreme God, whom they distinguish particularly by the name of τὸ Ἀγαθόν. 'Tis not however agreed, in what Manner these ideas have their existence. Most Platonists seem inclined to think, that the supreme God produc'd an animal, or mind, in which all these ideas are lodg'd and comprehended: This mind, particularly distinguish'd by the name of Νῦς (while the soul of the world is called ψυχή, which makes the

The

The doctrine it should seem, lay hid from ages, and was long unheard of among mankind; since they offer to point out to us the very

third God in the *Platonick Trinity*, so much spoken of) they call the *second God*, the *off-spring* of the *first*, and esteem him to be the maker of the world, *Macrob. in somn. Scip. Lib. I. cap. 2. p. 6.* Or as *Plato* himself says, the supreme God and Father of all, attending to the *ideas* comprehended in the *second God* or mind, did upon these form and bring forth the universe. *Plat. in Timæo p. 30. C. p. 39. E. Vol. III.* Others seem to imagine that these *ideas* are not comprehended in any particular mind; but that they exist separately, each one by itself; and are to be regarded as so many distinct and particular Gods, upon which this world was formed, and whereof all *mundane* things are pure *types* and representations. In this light they seem to be acknowledged by *Apuleius* in his treatise *de Deo Socratis*, p. 287. But *Julian* the emperor, who abandon'd the Christian profession, is of opinion, that these *ideas*, in themselves so many distinct substances, and the *architypes* of all sensible Beings, do exist in and with the supreme God. *Cyril. Alex. cont. Jul. Lib. II. p. 65. Vol. VI.* from whom, however, they may be parted, and enjoy a separate existence; as one may judge from the case of *Æsculapius*, which I shall mention by and by. See *Euseb.*

præp. Evangel. Lib. XI. cap. xxiii.

Thus it is that the *Platonists* represent the *divine ideas*. And it must be confess'd, that *Plato* himself is not very exact in his account of them. *Piccolomini* remarks, *Che alcuna volta pare che lo ponga fust della mente di Dio separate da tutti queste cose inferiori. Ne si può, says he, da suoi scritti trar certa notitia del luogo, nel quale le ponesse; perchiocche alcuna volta par che le ponga nel cielo stellato sotto 'l Zodiaco; alcuna volta nel concavo del ciel lunare: di maniera chei filosofi che lo interpretano, non sono in questa d'un medesimo parere. Dell. Instit. Moral. Lib. II. cap. 4. p. 46.* *Plutarch* indeed informs us that *Socrates* and *Plato* apprehended, that these *ideas* subsist in the conceptions and notions of God: *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph. Lib. I. cap. x. p. 882. Vol. II.* But *Plato* likewise gives them out as *νοητὰ ζῷα, intelligible animals*, the patterns of those that are *συνεσθητὰ, sensible*, comprehended in *νοηστὸν ζῷον, an intelligible animal*. *Plat. ubi supra.* He says further, that they are immortal gods, *Id. ib. p. 37. C.* and also professes, that they are the only things derived from the supreme God, which have a *true and real existence*: for that, in his opinion, all the several beings, that are in this person

person that first made the discovery. It very little affects my argument, whoever may be esteemed the author of this opinion. I am only

world, are only the bare images and representations of these ideas, and therefore *one remove from the truth and reality of existence.*

Nihil enim Plato putat esse, quod oriatur & intereat; idque solum esse quod semper tale sit; qualem ideam appellat ille, nos speciem. Cic. Tuscul. Q. Lib. I. cap. xxiv.

Thus, "A joiner, he tells us, does not make the idea he has of a bed; God is the maker thereof: and the bed that is form'd by the joiner, is only the image or resemblance of that idea made by God, which we call a bed, and which alone has a true and real existence: So that God may be properly nam'd *Φυσιολογος*:"

Plat. de Rep. Lib. X. p. 596, 597, & 2. The doctrine of F.

X Mallebranche concerning our seeing all things in God, &c. is, one should think, much of kin to these principles of Plato.

And I cannot but here observe, that as Democritus maintains, that we apprehend or perceive things by certain images continually flowing from them, and striking upon our minds; so he calls those images, and the nature of beings from which they flow, and the notions or perceptions they afford to us, he calls them all Gods. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. cap. xii. 43.*

In the next place, it seems to be a truth very manifest, that God alone is the object of our

religious worship, and that all our devotion ought to be paid to him alone. And yet some philosophers teach us, that if we cannot apprehend the supreme God and Father of all, we may content ourselves with his works, and offer up our religious worship to them. Thus Maximus Tyrius, having nobly exhorted us to raise our minds above the starry frame, and to contemplate and adore the great maker of the universe; "If you are not able, says he, to contemplate that Father and Maker of all things; it will be sufficient for you for the present, to behold his works, and to worship his progeny or off-spring, which is various and manifold. For there are not only, according to the Boeotian poet, thirty thousand Gods, all the sons and friends of the supreme God; but innumerable. And such in heaven are the stars; in the æther demons." *Max. Tyr. Dissert. I. p. 12, &c.*

To add no more upon this head; it can't but be judg'd a most certain truth, that the best worship, and the most acceptable service we can render to God, is to adore him in the compos'd, regular, and manly thought of the mind; and to imitate him in forming our inward tempers and affections upon the perfections of his bene-

concerned

concerned to examine *by what means* it was acquired. However, to set things in a fuller light, I shall here consider, which of these two,

ficent nature; and in exercising all acts of love and sincere kindness towards our fellow creatures: and yet some philosophers maintain, that we serve and worship God *more acceptably*, when in his service, we conceive an inward *servour* and *enthusiasm*, and chearfully indulge to *feasting*, to *musick*, and *dancing*, and other instances of mirth and jollity. " 'Tis common, says Strabo, both among Greeks and Barbarians, to accompany their sacrifices with a *festival* vacation; some of which they offer up with *enthusiasm*, and others without it; some with *musick*, and others wanting it; some *mysteriously* or in secret, and others openly and before the world: and in all these things we are thus taught and directed by *nature*. For a *festival* vacation withdraws people's thoughts from worldly business, and turns the mind towards God: *enthusiasm* seems to have in it a certain *divine inspiration*, that approaches to the *prophetick* kind: hidden and *mysterious* sacrifices do *honour* to the divinity. For they resemble his nature, which *escapes our senses*: and *musick* being conversant in dancing, measure, and tune, it unites us to God by its wonderful art and pleasure. It is indeed *well said*, that men

" do particularly imitate the
" Gods, when they perform acts
" of kindness and beneficence;
" but it is *better said*, when
" they are happy; and this
" they are in rejoicing, in keeping *holy days*, in philosophizing, and in their indulging to
" *musick*." Thus it is that Strabo gives his opinion as a philosopher; and he goes on saying a great deal in commendation of *musick*. Strab. Lib. X. p. 467. C.

I might instance in a great many other particulars; but these I have mention'd are sufficient to convince us, that philosophers, the *men of reason*, that have no system of *revealed* truths, would prove but sorry instructors of mankind, in what relates to God and religion.

I need make no reflections for explaining the *pernicious* influence, which the above *philosophical* opinions necessarily have upon the religious sentiments and practice of mankind; and how they naturally tend to corrupt people's morals: nor need I go about to shew after what manner they might come to involve the world in mutual hatred and persecutions. I would only observe, 'tis astonishing to me, how men of common sense came to think and speak at the rate they do, concerning the *divine idea*.

These very *ideas* of Plato, as
Thales

Thales Milesius or *Anaxagoras Clazomenius* (who among the *Grecian* philosophers seem to be the only rivals in this question) may be counted the first publisher of this doctrine.

they happen to be explain'd, introduce into the world an *infinite* number of Gods, and betray poor unthinking mortals into the lowest, the most abject idolatry. No one object any where can we set our eyes upon, which hath not its *architype* in heaven, that is *there* an immortal God! And what can hinder us from worshipping its *type* or image here upon earth? In this manner *Julian* explains, that *Æsculapius* is one of the greatest gifts that *Jupiter* and the *Sun* have bestow'd upon mankind: "*Jupiter*, says he, did from himself among the intelligible things (the *ideas* or Gods) produce *Æsculapius*: and he being brought forth by the generative heat of the *Sun*, came from heaven to earth, and appeared in human shape at *Epidaurus*; from whence he stretched his salutary hand all over the earth." *Cyril. cont. Jul. Lib. VI. p. 200. Vid. Julian. Orat. 4. p. 144. B. p. 153. B.* So that *Æsculapius* appearing in this light, and being, as it were, a God incarnated, he is thought to be a proper object of religious worship. But the *Egyptians* did particularly give into such sort of sentiments: they conceive that both rational and brute creatures partake of divinity; they represent them

as certain symbols of God: and 'tis remarkable that *Celsus* (who was zealous to overthrow the christian institution) justified their worship, in telling us, it was paid them, as the *Egyptians* themselves profess, not in honour of the dying animals, but of the immortal and eternal ideas. *Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. I. p. 16. Lib. III. p. 121.* Thus every thing about us is deify'd, and every thing about us is worshipped: the world is over-run with idolatry, and mankind are sunk in impiety and atheism.

Perhaps indeed, our modern deists, and men of reason, may have the modesty to apprehend, that, was the world under their discipline, no such hurtful consequences could ever happen. But I hope, I do them no dishonour, when I compare them to the greatest men of antiquity. And let us put the case, that the speculations about *Plato's* ideas come to prevail among them; is it not natural, I do not say religiously to worship, but greatly to respect and honour the things that are about us, whose architypes are real substantial beings, and so many Gods in heaven? and may not one presume to call these types and images by the names of those Gods whom they particularly represent? Hitherto, one may

As for *Thales*, the only evidence, so far as I know, that stands upon his side, comes from a passage in *Cicero* (for *Minucius* and *Lactan-*

think, a man cannot fail to go in his speculations. And thus far, perhaps, there is no harm in it, neither impiety nor idolatry. But who can answer for the consequences of such doctrines, vented and taught publicly? *Plutarch* speaks of a case much of the same nature, and takes notice of the bad effects it had upon mankind; and to me they seem unavoidable.

“As we use to say of one who has bought *Plato's* books, that he hath bought *Plato*; in like manner, says *Plutarch*, the ancients did not stick to call the gifts and creatures of the Gods, by the names of the Gods themselves. But those of after-times receiving this practice unskillfully and ignorantly, did not only call them Gods, but also believed them such; and so filled themselves with abundance of absurd, wicked, and distempered notions: which, *he says a little before*, are most dangerous and *atheistical*.” *Plut. de Isid. & Osir. p. 379. B.*

Such were the sentiments of some ancient philosophers concerning the divine ideas, whilst others violently oppos'd the whole of this doctrine, and absolutely deny'd there are any such existences. Perhaps indeed our modern deists may apprehend great absurdity in the notions of their ancient brethren;

(which is the relation they are pleas'd to claim.) But should the prospect of publick encouragement, or any particular temptation, come to engage their minds in the pursuit of such enquiries, one is tempted to think, 'tis not unlikely but they might become as remarkable in their speculations: nor can any body tell us, what shall hinder them from conceiving the same notions, which other people profess who pretend to proceed upon the light and information of reason. From the differences that now happen among learned men, who know a great deal more about God than the *heathens* did, one may readily suspect, that the *deists* of our times are in hazard of teaching very different doctrines, and of holding, perhaps the same, or as great absurdities as are to be found among the ancients. And since people's opinions concerning the divine ideas do not at all arise from the *christian* religion, but wholly from *philosophical* enquiries, one may have leave to illustrate the matter from the case of some christians.

I shall not here instance in those extravagancies, that happen'd to be maintain'd upon this article in former ages: I come to our own times; and we find Archbishop *King* is of opinion, that we cannot possibly know whether in the mind of God

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tius only copy out what they conjecture to be the meaning of this passage) which happens to be very lame and imperfect, and consequently,

there be any such thing as *ideas*.

"As to what is said, *says he*, of the understanding of God, that the *ideas* of all things possible are in it; 'tis plain that all arguments drawn from the manner of God's understanding things must be inconclusive, because we are utterly ignorant whether he understands by *ideas* or not."

Orig. of Evil, chap. v. subsect. 4. p. 295. *Notes*. Here we see there is a foundation laid for controversy and debate, in a matter which some people reckon of the last consequence. And from one's confessing an utter ignorance of this doctrine, how easy is it to go a step farther, and in positive terms to declare absolutely against it? which may come to engage people to oppose this article about divine ideas as much as ever *Aristotle* himself did, and perhaps with as great a profusion of metaphysics. Again, Mr. Naudé seems to apprehend, that the divine ideas are the effects or productions of the divine will. *On doit dire*, says he, *qu'avant qu'on suppose la volonté de Dieu, il n'y a rien d'existant, de futur, ni même de concevable, que Dieu même.* — — — — — *Concevons donc premièrement la volonté de Dieu formant simplement les idées de certaines choses selon la souveraine sagesse, par où elle est auteur total de la réalité de*

ces idées, laquelle réalité elle ne tire pas des choses qui aient existé avant elle, comme il arrive à nos idées, mais la sagesse divine les tire de la seule volonté de Dieu. La souver. perfect. de Dieu, chap. ii. §. 142. — 144. com. 2. And says *Photius of Clemens Alexandrinus*, *ιδέας ως ἀπὸ τῶν ἑλῶν ἰσχυράς δοξάζει. Biblioth.* 109. p. 286. Now this doctrine, that gives out the divine ideas to be the creatures or productions of the divine will, is not only liable in itself to be wholly controverted; but it seems necessarily to bring along with it other very absurd opinions like to these, *viz.* *Those ideas thus produc'd are either all lodg'd in the divine intellect; or they exist separately each one by itself, and are perhaps to be counted so many particular deities: or being all comprehend'd together in one particular being, they make up a second God, the immediate off-spring of the first.* Such, I say, are the opinions to which people may chance to be zealously devoted. And when one considers the opinions held by some modern philosophers concerning a plastic nature or virtue, an hylarchic principle, or a spirit or ether pervading the universe, and proving the author or cause of all animal and vegetable life, and of every other phenomenon, one cannot but see how easy it is for

is very perplex'd and obscure. His words are: *Thales enim Mileſius, qui primus de talibus rebus quaſivit, aquam dixit eſſe initium rerum; Deum*

people to ſlide into the opinion of an *uni-verſal ſoul* of the world, which they may reckon a *third God*. So that, if I may ſo far preſume upon their indulgence, I would here remark, that our *modern deists*, as well as their brethren of old, ſeem to be in hazard of falling into the notion of a *trinity*, and of making it an eſſential article of their *creed*.

But perhaps the *orthodox* opinion (if one can imagine ſo frightful an engine to have place among *Free-thinkers*) may happen to be that of Sir *Iſ. Newton*, wherein he profeſſes, that "God
" is a being incorporeal, living,
" intelligent, omnipreſent, who
" in infinite ſpace, as it were
" in his *ſenſory*, ſees the things
" themſelves intimately, and
" thoroughly perceives them, and
" comprehends them wholly by
" their immediate preſence to
" himſelf: of which things the
" images only carried through
" the organs of ſenſe into our
" little *ſenſoriums*, are there
" ſeen and beheld by that which
" in us perceives and thinks."

Opt. B 3. Qu. 28. p. 345. This, I ſay, may happen to be the *orthodox* opinion, which muſt maintain its ground, not only againſt the ſentiments juſt now mention'd, but, againſt other ſpeculations of reaſon and philoſophy. Thus Mr. *Leibnitz* and his followers will keenly oppoſe this opinion; and in

the courſe of their objections againſt *ſpace*, and *ſenſory*, and God's ſeeing all things by their *immediate preſence to himſelf*, which they reckon great abſurdities, it will be ſtrongly alledged, that the *Newtonians* by this ſcheme would make God the *ſoul of the world*. While on the other Hand, 'tis objected againſt Mr. *Leibnitz*, that his profeſſing that God perceives and knows all things, not by being preſent to them, but by continually producing them anew, is a mere fiction of the *ſchoolmen*: And that in his account of God's firſt producing the univerſe, he would make the *material world and every thing elſe*, both infinite and eternal, neceſſarily and independently upon God. Which, they do not fail to obſerve, is making God no governor at all, but a mere neceſſary agent, that is, indeed no agent at all, but mere fate, and nature, and neceſſity. Theſe and ſeveral other articles of mutual charge may be ſeen in thoſe letters, that paſſ'd between Mr. *Leibnitz* and Dr. *Clarke*.

Now I leave it to the reader to judge, whether in ſuch circumſtances, one has not good reaſon to be jealous of the peace of the world, and violently to ſuſpect that ſuch different ſpeculations, eſpecially if publick teachers among *deists* had any publick encouragement to contend for, might in time come
autem,

autem, eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret.
i. e. "Thales Milesius, who first inquired into
"such things, gave out water to be the first prin-

to produce as violent persecutions, as ever yet happen'd among Christians? And upon this opportunity,

I would fain beg leave to observe, that those shameful barbarous persecutions, wherein the Christian world so miserably has been involved, and whereby an everlasting reproach falls upon the authors and abettors of such base unmanly cruelties, have arisen not from any thing in the gospel of Jesus Christ, but from the vain speculations of men of reason and philosophy. *Dottrina Christi*, says Erasmus, *quæ prius nesciebat λόγου χάριν, caput a philosophiæ præfidiis pendere: Hic erat primus gradus ecclesiæ ad deteriora prolapsæ*. Did not philosophers in turning Christians bring along with them their metaphorical reasonings, and their abstruse subtleties? And did not these grow up, and from one age to another, prove the matter of hot contentions, the bane of human society, and engage the world in mutual bloodshed and massacre? I might shew what dreadful havoc has been made of Christianity by peoples being infatuated with Plato's ideas. — But how long did Aristotle reign in the Christian church? or, does he yet dictate in chairs of divinity, bring forth mysteries in the pul-

pit, and decide controversies in councils and synods? *Gl'intendenti dell' ecclesiastica historia dicevano, che in tutti i concilii tenuti nella chiefa dal tempo degli apostoli, fino a quell' hora, posti tutti insieme, mai erano stati decisi tanti articoli, quanti in quella sola sessione. In che haveva gran parte Aristotele, coll' haver distinto esattamente tutti i generi di cause; a che se egli non fosse adoperato, noi mancavano di molti articoli di fede.* Fra. Paol. Hist. del Concil. Trident. Lib. II. p. 234. We are told that the scholastics have made the foundation of the Christian doctrine the philosophy of Aristotle, and left the scripture. *ibid.* p. 193. And some people dare to profess, I dogmize of the doctrine as much as is cleared up at present by the scholastics, but not as it should be taught by the scripture. *ibid.* 163. A great deal might be said to this purpose, wherein Christians of all denominations come highly to be blamed (*Vid. Cleric. Ar. Critic. Par. II. Sect. ii. cap. ii. § 11. 12. p. 180.*) But I say all in this: The schools — the schools of reason and philosophy, the vain speculations of men of (false) learning, have quite spoiled the beautiful simplicity of the gospel of our Saviour, that never was design'd to be explain'd or improv'd by scholastick jargon, or the abstruse

"ciple of things; and God to be that mind,
"which formed all things of water." Herein I
confess, if the whole sentence, as it stands,

reasoning of Plato and Aristotle.

Let it only further be remarked, that those unhappy arguments (taken from mischievous consequences) whereby the *deists* would go about to prove that the Christian religion cannot have come from heaven, are employ'd by Cotta in maintaining that reason is no blessing to mankind, but rather a curse, and cannot therefore be esteemed a gift from God, or any proof of God's having a concern for mankind. *Sentit domus, says he, uniuscujusque, sentit forum, sentit curia, campus, socii, provinciae, ut quemadmodum ratione recte fiat, sic ratione peccetur. Alterum & a paucis, & raro, alterum & saepe, & a pluribus: ut satius fuerit nullam omnino nobis a diis immortalibus datam esse rationem, quam tanta cum perniciē datam — Quae enim libido, quae avaritia, quod facinus aut suscipitur nisi consilio capto, aut sine animi motu & cogitatione, id est, ratione perficitur? Quid enim potius hominibus dedissent, si iis nocere voluissent? Injustitia autem, intemperantia, timiditatis quae semina essent, si his vitiiis ratio non subesset? — Ut donum hoc divinum rationis & consilii ad fraudem hominibus, non ad bonitatem impertitum esse videatur. Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. III. cap. xxvii. xxviii. xxx.*
This is Cotta's argument. And

the *deists* may now judge, whether, so far, this is not precisely their way of reasoning against revelation. I shall only say, that by what means they will justify reason, upon which they so much bear themselves; by the same means is the Christian institution vindicated. *Errores non sunt artis, sed artificum.*

I thought next to have instanced in some particulars which shew us, that men of reason and philosophy, are capable of corrupting the plainest truths that regard our social conduct. But having been so long upon the former article, I shall refer the reader to *Sextus Empiricus* in his *Pyrrh. Hyp. Lib. III. cap. xxiv.* And only here report what sort of social behaviour prevailed among the *Massagetae*, a people of *Scythia*, who made good soldiers, and had the politeness to shine in gold: to which I shall add a passage in *Justin*, Lib. XXI. cap. iii. "*The Massagetae* (as *Strabo* informs us, Lib. XI. p. 513.) had every man only one wife; but they had leave to use those of their neighbours, without the ceremony of retiring from publick view: for when a man had to do with his neighbour's wife, he hung up his quiver at the coach or waggon, and thus acted his part openly. And with them it was counted the best sort of death, to chop
was

was expressed by *Thales*; and if the words with him, bear the same meaning they do among us; the existence of the deity is asserted very clearly. But what shall we make of this other part of the passage, that immediately follows, and which contains an objection to *Thales's* opinion? *Si Dii possunt esse sine sensu & mente, cur aquæ adjunxit, si ipsa mens constare potest vacans corpore?* It appears from numberless instances, that ancient philosophers did not understand these words, *God, mind, &c.* as we do; but express by them *fire, air, or whatever other material being* they apprehended as the *first cause* of things, or the author of motion². And

"down old people among mutton,
"and in this impious manner to
"devour them. But as for those
"who dy'd by sickness, they
"threw them out as impious,
"and worthy to be devoured
"by wild beasts." *Cumque Rhe-*
ginorum tyranni Leophronis bel-
lo Locrenses premerentur, vove-
rant, si victores forent, ut die
sesto Veneris virgines suas prosti-
tuerent. Good God! What ex-
travagant and shocking impie-
ties, do men, left to themselves,
come to regard and practise as
things sacred, worthy, and lau-
dable! I cannot here neglect to
take notice of an observation
of ancient Christians, namely,
where no other authority was able
to prevent those abominations that
prevail'd among the heathen,
there the gospel of Jesus Christ
triumph'd, in reducing men to the
fear of God and the love of vir-

tue. Vid. Theodoret. Græc.
Affect. Curat. Serm. 9. Euseb.
Præp. Evangel. Lib. I. cap. iv.
p. 11. & alib.

² Theodoret observes, that hea-
then philosophers, in their talk-
ing about divine matters, re-
semble speaking birds that sound
words without knowing the
meaning. *Græc. Affect. Curat.*
Serm. 1. p. 483. And says,
Clement Alexandrinus, Δια-
φέρει ὅ τὸν θεὸν ἰπεῖν, ἢ τὰ περὶ
θεῶ. — ἰπεῖ τοῦτο δύο αἰτίαι
ἰδίαι τῆς ἀληθείας, τὰ τι ὀνό-
ματα, καὶ τὰ πράγματα· οἱ γὰρ
τὰ ὀνόματα λέγουσι, οἱ περὶ τὰ
κάλαν τῶν λόγων διατρέχοντες,
οἱ παρ' Ἑλλήσι φιλόσοφοι τὰ
πράγματα ὅ, παρ' ἡμῶν ἰσ-
τοῖς βαρβάρους. — Οὐκ ὀ-
ρεῖται, Πάτερ ἀνδρῶν τι θεῶν τι,
μὴ ἰδὼς τίς ὁ πατήρ, καὶ πῶς ὁ
πατήρ. Strom. Lib. VI. p. 689.
D.

if

if one may judge what *Thales* might mean by *mind* or *God*, from the objection that is here made to him; it should seem that he thereby understood *something united to water*, so as with it to make up one *compounded being*. Indeed, the passage is lame and obscure; but in all the explications that *criticks* give of it, we are still led to conceive *mind* (or *God*) and *water*, *united together*. So that *Thales* cannot be thought to have had any notion of an *infinite mind*. If he really gave out a *mind* to be concerned in the formation of the universe; I am apt to think, that he thereby only meant a *natural heat* diffused in *water* (for *water*, as *Balbus* observes^a, has a mixture of the universal generative heat or *æther*) that contributed to the production of things; and which is fancy'd by *Hippocrates*, as well as other philosophers, to be *immortal*, to *perceive all things*, to *see*, *hear*, and *know all things* present and to come^b. And there seems

^a Cic. ubi supra Lib. II. cap. x.

^b Let the reader judge from *Hippocrates's* account of this *hot thing*, upon which he bestows these *divine qualities*, what sort of notions he and other philosophers must have had of it. His account is this:

Δοκίει δὲ μοι, ὃ καλέομεν θερμόν, ἀθάνατον τε εἶναι, καὶ νοεῖν πάντα, καὶ ὄρεν, καὶ ἀκύνει, καὶ ἰδῖναι πάντα, καὶ τὰ ὄντα, καὶ τὰ ἰσόμενα· τὰτο δὲ τὸ πλεῖστον, ὅτι ἐπαρκομένη πάντα, ἐξικωρῆσεν ἐς τὸ ἀνωτάτω περὶ φορεῖν καὶ ὀνομαζομένη μοι αὐτὴ δοκίεσιν οἱ παλαιοί,

*Aithera. ἡ δευτέρα μοῖρα ἡ κατὰ θεὸν αὐτῇ, καλεῖται μὲν γὰρ, ψυχὴν καὶ ζῆλον, καὶ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐν ἡ δὲ πνεῦμα τῷ θερμῷ καὶ τῷ τριτῷ μοῖρα, καὶ τῷ ἐν τῷ χυμῷ οἱ ἱκανοί, θερμὸν τε καὶ ὑγρὸν εἶναι. ἡ δὲ τελέστα, ἡ τῷ ἰγγυτάτω πνεύματι γὰρ, ὑγρὸν τὸν τε καὶ παχυτάτον. De Princip. § 1. This lets us see how greatly the ingenious Mr. Croufaz is mistaken in alledging, that *fire* was only a *metaphorical expression* used by the ancients to represent the *active nature of the first causes*. Exam. du Pyrrhonism, p. 428. 431.

to be good reason to suspect, that this was his opinion, when he professes, that *all things are full of Gods*.

BUT after all, it appears to me more than probable, that *Thales* assigned *water* as the *only principle* concerned in the formation of the world. Certain it is, that *Cicero* himself, when he has occasion elsewhere to take notice of *Thales's* opinion, mentions nothing about his introducing a *mind*, to form all things of *water*; but represents him as holding, that *water* is the *only first principle* of all things: whereas he nowhere fails to declare that *Anaxagoras* maintained the *efficiency of an infinite mind*. Besides, we have above observed that *Aristotle* reckons *Thales* among those, who profess *only one first cause* or principle, without inquiring into the origin of motion. Nor do I know any one philosopher, if we lay aside this imperfect confused passage in *Cicero*, who explains his opinion any otherwise. And as philosophers thus far agree in representing *Thales* to profess no other principle but *water*; so they unanimously report, that *Anaxagoras* was the first who introduced the doctrine of an *infinite mind*. Nay *Tully* himself, a few sentences after he has related *Thales's* opinion, expressly says, that *Anaxagoras was the first who asserted the efficiency of an infinite mind in the production of the universe*. So that, so far as I can judge, not the least reason have we to suspect, that *Thales* had any

notion of an *infinite mind*.

IT is true *Diogenes Laertius* observes, that *Thales* among other witty sayings, has likewise these: "God is the ancientest of beings; for he is ungenerated. The world is the most beautiful; for it is the work or production of God. And being asked, whether a man in his wicked actions can escape the notice of the Gods? Nay not, says he, in his thoughts^d." But these sayings are no sort of evidence, that *Thales* had any notion of an infinite mind. It has been already remarked, that philosophers never failed to call *that* a God, whatever it was, which they gave out as the first cause or principle of the universe. And therefore, since *Thales* gives out *water alone* as the first principle; *this* must be his *first God*, the *antientest* of beings, and indeed *ungenerated*: and the world, as it arises out of water, must be counted its work or production. Mean while *Plutarch*, from whom *D. Laertius* seems to have collected these witty sayings, does not observe, that *Thales* said, *the world is the most beautiful being*, because it is the work of God, *but because every thing regular and well proportioned is a part of it*^e. And as for the Gods, *their discerning the thoughts of our hearts*, this is a common opinion among philosophers, who are far from apprehending any such being as an infinite mind. And we may judge from *Cicero*, as we may likewise do from

^d *D. Laert. in Thal. p. 9.*
B. C.

^e *Plut. Sept. Sap. Conviv.*
p. 153. C. Vol. II.

D. Laertius, that *Thales* attributed this knowledge, not to any particular being, but to that sort of Gods, whereof, he says, the world is full^f. Upon all which I am fully satisfied, that none of these sayings do in any sort shew us, that *Thales* conceived an infinite mind to be concerned in the formation of the universe. His first and greatest God, as I have said, is certainly *water*; which in the quality, as I apprehend, of a *warm nourishing moisture* pervading the universe, proves the enlivening soul of the world: for the world, in his opinion, is an animated being^g.

But if it shall be supposed, that *Thales* was the first *Grecian* philosopher who taught this doctrine; it should seem, it was so much despised, or so little regarded by all other *wise men* and philosophers, that it came soon to be quite forgotten; and for the space of near an hundred years, was not heard of till *Anaxagoras* happened to revive it, and for its newness or singularity, got the title of *Nûs*, or mind^h.

I have already hinted, that all antient philosophers without exception, report *Anaxagoras* to be the author of this doctrine, nor can it at all be suspected, that he had it from *Thales*; who does not really seem to have himself had any such apprehensionⁱ. So that *Anaxagoras* being

^f *Cic. de Legib. Lib. II. cap. xi.*

^g *D. Laert. in Thal. p. 7. B. Plat. de Placit. Philosoph. Lib. I. cap. vii. p. 881. D.*

^h *Id. in Pericl. p. 154. B. Vol. I. D. Laert. in Anaxag. p. 34.*

ⁱ Supposing that *Thales* was professed of this doctrine; *the*

the first philosopher within our knowledge, who professed this opinion; it seems here highly fitting, that we enquire *by what means* he came to conceive it? And if we shall suppose, that of himself, and without all foreign information, he acquired the knowledge of this principle; it must at the same time be allowed, that in the course of his own enquiries, he arrived at it by a *natural series and connexion of things*, or, that by *understanding the effects*, he was led to *discern the cause*. Now, whether it really happened so, one may easily judge from the avowed sentiments of *Anaxagoras* about the origin and formation of *particular beings*.

I do believe nothing bids fairer to lead one to *apprehend the existence of an infinite mind*, than one's *attending to the structure and formation of animals*; and *contemplating the construction, the motions and revolutions of the heavenly bodies*. And in truth, the contrivance and design, the power, the wisdom and goodness, that shine forth in these several beings, do plainly point out, do loudly proclaim a *most wonderful glorious architect*^k. *I am fearfully and won-*

nucius expressly declares, that such a doctrine lying beyond human discovery, he must have had it from revelation. Sit Thales Milesius omnium primus qui primus omnium de cælestibus disputavit. Idem Milesius Thales rerum initium aquam dixit: Deum autem eam mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta formaverit. Ebo altior & sublimior aquæ & spiri-

tus ratio, quam ut ab homine potuerit inveniri: a Deo traditum, Min. Fel. Octav. cap. xix. p. 92:

^k " Upon a transient View
" of the animal world in general only, we have such a
" throng of glories, such a
" ravishing scene of things as
" may excite us to admire,
" praise, and adore the infinite-
" ly wise, powerful, and kind
derfully

derfully made, says the *Psalmist*: *Marvellous are thy works, O Lord! and that my soul knoweth right well.* And in another place: *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work.* In my apprehension, so much does our knowledge of the deity depend upon our being well informed about the nature and original of *animals*, and of the *heavenly bodies*; that if a man's notions in these articles shall lead him quite off from having any suspicion of an infinite mind, I confess, I cannot possibly understand what there is *in nature*, that will engage him to conjecture the existence of such a being.

And thus, the formation and structure of animals, and of the heavenly bodies, being the

“ creator: to condemn all a-
 “ theistical principles; and to
 “ conclude, that he is in good
 “ earnest a fool, that dares to
 “ say, there is no God, when
 “ we are every where surround-
 “ ed with such manifest cha-
 “ racters, and plain demonstra-
 “ tion of that infinite being.”
Derb. Physico-Theol. B. 4. chap.
xvi. p. 259.

And as for the heavenly bodies:
Astronomiæ præstantia exinde
patet, quod nulla est lumine
naturæ nota scientia, quæ ad
cognitionem summi & omnipo-
tentis Dei, cœli terræque con-
ditoris, magis nos ducit; nulla
solidiora administrat argumenta,
quibus ejus existentia demon-
stratur, quam ea; non aliunde
magis evincitur Dei potentia,

summaque sapientia, quam ex
fiderum motuumque cœlestium
contemplatione. — Nihil certe
magis rapit animos hominum in
Dei admirationem, reverenti-
am & amorem, quam tot tan-
tæque corpora & lumina cœle-
stia quæ visui pulcherrima, &
intellectui jucundissima sunt. Eo-
rum obviationses ad invicem,
motus ordinatissimi, & deter-
minatæ circulationes, divinitus-
que præscriptæ reversionum le-
ges, in concinnitate admirabili,
summam Dei potentiam, sapi-
entiam, bonitatem, & provi-
dentiam manifestant. Quibus
perceptis, ad universi hujus auc-
torem & conditorem admiran-
dum, venerandum, semperque
celebrandum impellimur. Keil.
Præfat. ad Astronom. p. 1. & 2.

great

great successful means, whereby one may come to discover the being of God; if the notions, which *Anaxagoras* conceived in both these articles, have no manner of relation, no sort of tendency towards God, but directly lead to causes entirely and absolutely different, and indeed strangely absurd and ridiculous; how can one ever imagine, that the knowledge, which he had of the existence of an infinite mind, was the result of rational enquiry and argument?

As for the original and formation of animals; how far was Anaxagoras from apprehending these just sentiments of a noble author addressing himself to God Almighty? Marvellous are thy works! My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. So far was *Anaxagoras* from having any notion of this infinite mind, in accounting for the rise and formation of animals, that he apprehended, that *man* and *all other animals* did originally spring, of their own accord, out of a humid, warm, earthy substance; and came afterwards to propagate one another¹. And herein he shews himself no better philosopher than the poet, who follows the superstitious multitude in their wild notions of things; and who, having represented mankind to take their rise from

¹ D. Laert. in *Anaxag.* p. 35. D.

stones, thus delivers himself with respect to other animals, which had their birth after *Deucalion's* deluge:

*Cætera diversis tellus animalia formis
Sponte sua peperit; postquam vetus humor
ab igne*

*Percaluit solis; cænumque, udæque paludes
Intumuere æstu, fœcundaque semina rerum
Vivaci nutrita solo, ceu matris in alvo,
Creverunt, faciemque aliquam cepere morando^m.*

So that with regard to the interposition of an infinite mind in the formation of the *animal world*, there is no difference between *Anaxagoras* and downright *atheists*, or other philosophers who have no notion of any being beyond matter. *Anaximander* tells us, that the *first animals* were generated from a moist or watry substance; and being inclosed in thorny barks, as they grew older, they became more dry; and the bark wherein they were lodged breaking, they lived but a short timeⁿ. Upon which, it should seem, this philosopher fancying himself not able, in this manner, to bring forth men that should be durable, he casts about for another idle hypothesis, and is pleased to inform us, that “men
“ were generated in the bellies of fishes, and
“ being there nourished, till they became able
“ to shift for themselves, they were cast out
“ upon dry land. So that esteeming fish to be

^m Ovid. *Metamorph.* Lib. I.
p. 416.

ⁿ Plut. *de Placit. Philosoph.*
Lib. V. cap. xix. p. 908.

“ the common parents of mankind, *Anaximander* condemns our feeding on them.” We are likewise told of *three* or *four* very odd *bungling* attempts in nature towards the generation of plants and animals, as reported by *Empedocles*¹: and this philosopher himself gives judgment that *men* are *swarthy*, *stouter*, and more *hairy* than *women*, because they spring from *hotter earth*:

Ἐν δὲ θερμότερῳ τὸ κατ' ἄρρενα ἔπλετο γαίης
Καὶ μέλανεσσι διὰ τῆτο, καὶ ἀνδρωδέστεροι ἄνδρες,
Καὶ λαχνηέντες μᾶλλον.

ARCHELAUS, who was *Anaxagoras's* scholar, and *Socrates's* master, is of opinion, that animals were produced from *warm earth* sending forth a *slime*, much like *milk*, for their nourishment; and that even *mankind* had no better original². Much after the same manner does *Lucretius* explain the sentiments of *Epicurus* and his followers:

Principio genus alituum, variaque volucres
Ova relinquebant exclusæ tempore verno:
Folliculos ut nunc teretes æstate cicadæ
Linguunt, sponte sua victum vitamque petentes.
Tum tibi terra dedit primum mortalia sæcla:
Multis enim calor, atque humor superabat in
arvis.

Hinc ubi quæque loci regio opportuna dabatur,
Crescebant uteri terræ radicibus apti:

¹ *Id.* in *Sympos.* Lib. VIII. Lib. V. cap. xix.

Quæst. 8. p. 730. E.

² *D. Laert.* in *Archel.* p. 37.

³ *Id.* de *Placit. Philosoph.* C.

Quos ubi tempore maturo patefecerat ætas,
 Infantum fugiens humorem, aurasque petissens,
 Convertibat ibi natura foramina terræ,
 Et succum venis cogebat fundere apertis
 Conſimilem lactis: ſicut nunc ſcæmina quæque,
 Cum peperit, dulci repletur lacte, quod omnis
 Impetus in mammas convertitur ille alimenti.
 Terra cibum pueris, veſtem vapor, herba cubile
 Præbebat, multa & molli lanugine abundans.

Quare etiam atque etiam maternum nomen adepta
 Terra tenet merito, quoniam genus ipſa creavit
 Humanum, atque animal prope certo tempore
 fudit

Omne, quod in magnis bacchatur montibus
 paſſim,
 Aeriasque ſimul volucreis variantibus formis?

IN ſhort, ſo univerſally did this opinion prevail, and ſo great was its credit in the world, that the graveſt and moſt judicious *hiſtorians* ſpeak of it in the common courſe of things, with as little *heſitation*, as they do of other *facts* the moſt feaſible and likely: nay, ſo well are they aſſured of the truth of it, that from hence they go about to explain ſome extraordinary events, and to rectify ſome *fabulous* accounts that had crept into antient hiſtory. Thus *Pauſanias* having obſerved, that “when the *Romans* had turned the courſe of the river *Oron-*”
 “*tes*, there was found in the old channel an

Lucr. Lib. V. ſ. 799.

“ earthen chest more than eleven cubits long,
 “ wherein lay the corps of an Indian nothing
 “ shorter;” he accounts for this extraordinary
 length of a human body in this manner: “ If,
 “ says he, in antient times the sun by warming
 “ the moist humid earth, brought forth the first
 “ men; what sort of earth, is it likely, would
 “ produce men of greater size than India, which
 “ even at this very day breeds animals so mon-
 “ strous for their shape and bigness?” Which
 are sentiments much of kin to these of *Lu-*
cretius :

*Multaque nunc etiam existunt animalia terris,
 Imbribus, & calido solis concreta vapore.*

*Quo minus est mirum, si tum sunt plura coorta,
 Et majora nova tellure, atque æthere adulto¹.*

AND *Diodorus Siculus*, who pretends to be-
 gin his history with that of the formation of the
 world, does not scruple at telling us, that “ the
 “ earth was at first slimy and quite soft, but af-
 “ terwards by the heat of the sun, being re-
 “ duced to a consistence, and its surface put in
 “ a ferment, in many places some of the oozy
 “ parts heaved up, and came to be putrid mat-
 “ ter inclosed in thin bags or membranes; so
 “ that after this manner, the oozy or humid
 “ parts being impregnated by the heat, the
 “ young were nourished by night from the fall-
 “ ing dew, and by day they were strengthened

¹ *Pausan.* in *Arcad.* p. 261.

1, 22.

² *Lucret.* Lib. V. § 795.

“ and grew firmer by the warming sun, till at
 “ last, being fully ripened, and their coverings
 “ breaking by the force of the heat, there came
 “ immediately forth all sorts of animals. And
 “ in this account of the origin of animals, *Eu-*
 “ *ripides*, being a scholar of *Anaxagoras*, seems
 “ to agree; for in his *Menalippe* (one of those
 “ tragedies now lost) he hath these verses:

Ὡς ἔρηνός τε γαῖά τ' ἦν μορφῇ μία,
 Ἐπεὶ δ' ἐχωρίσθησαν ἀλλήλων δίχα,
 Τίκτεσι πάντα καὶ ἔδωκαν εἰς Φάος,
 Δένδρη, πετεινὰ, θήρας ἔς θ' ἄλμυ τρέφει,
 Γένε' τε θνητῶν.

THUS *Diodorus* explains the first formation of animals, and so far is he from suspecting the truth of the fact, that from hence he would rectify a *fabulous* account they give us about the island of *Rhodes*. It should seem, “ that at the
 “ time when this island happened to be over-
 “ whelmed with a deluge, *Sol* falling in love
 “ with *Rhodes* (who was there born by *Halia* to
 “ *Neptune*) he carries off the deluge, and calls
 “ the island by her name.” This is the fable.
 “ But the truth of the matter, says *Diodorus*,
 “ is this: The island being now slimy and soft,
 “ as things were at the beginning, the sun
 “ dries up the great moisture, and having im-
 “ pregnated the earth, brings forth seven men,
 “ that from him are called *Heliades*, the off-
 “ spring of *Helios*, that is, the sun. In conse-

“ quence of which, the island became sacred
 “ to the *sun*; and the inhabitants continued to
 “ worship him beyond other deities, as being
 “ the author of their race.” And to shew
 us, that this opinion about the original forma-
 tion of animals deserves to be credited, we are
 led to reflect, that “ in *Ægypt* after the over-
 “ flowing of the *Nile*, there is produced from
 “ the slimy earth, grown putrid in many places
 “ of its surface by the heat of the sun, an in-
 “ numerable quantity of *mice*; some of which
 “ you will see moving with their breast and
 “ fore-limbs quite formed, while their hinder
 “ parts yet remain a shapeless piece of earth.”
 Which, one should think, is an article in history,
 that does not so well become *Diodorus*, as it
 does the *poet*, who describes it thus:

— *Ubi deseruit madidos septemfluvius agros*
Nilus, & antiquo sua flumina reddidit alveo,
Æthereoque recens exarsit sidere limus;
Plurima cultores versis animalia glebis
Inveniunt, & in his quædam modo cæpta sub
ipsum
Nascendi spatium; quædam imperfecta, suisque
Trunca vident humeris, & eodem in corpore
sæpe
Altera pars vivit, rudis est pars altera tellus.
Quippe ubi temperiem sumpsere humorque ca-
lorque,
Concipiunt, & ab his oriuntur cuncta duobus.”

* *Diod. Sicul. Lib. V. p. 327.*

† *Id. Lib. I. p. 8, 10.*

‡ *Ovid. Metam. Lib. I. 7422.*

So that, I say, *Anaxagoras* as little regards the wisdom, the contrivance, the superintendence, and efficiency of an infinite mind, in the first formation of the animal world, as those philosophers do, who are either mere *atheists*, or acknowledge no being above *matter*. And herein I presume the reader will fully agree with me; when we further consider, that *Anaxagoras* does not seem to apprehend, “that the
“members of the human body were formed
“with any *forecast* or design, to make the man-
“swer those uses to which we find they are
“adapted; but that, mankind having such par-
“ticular members, they come to use them to
“such purposes.” Thus *Aristotle*, *Plutarch*, and *Galen* expressly say, that *Anaxagoras* esteem-
ed man to be the wisest and most prudent of all
animals, because of his hands. Upon which these philosophers make some reflections, and give their judgment, that quite the contrary is true^a. And indeed *Anaxagoras* in this article differs as little as he does in the former, from the professed principles of undoubted *atheists*; nor can the two opinions well be separated.

*Illud in his rebus vitium vehementer, Et illum
Effugere errorem, vitareque præmeditator,
Lumina ne facias oculorum clara creata,
Prospicere ut possimus, Et ut proferre viam
Proceros passus, ideo fastigia posse*

^a *Arist. de Part. Animal. Lib. IV. p. 134. A. Vol. I. Plut. de* *Fratern. Amor. p. 478. E. Gal. de Ufu Part. Lib. I. cap. iii.*

*Surarum, ac feminum pedibus fundata plicari:
 Brachia tum porro validis ex apta lacertis
 Esse, manusque datas utraque a parte ministras,
 Ut facere ad vitam possimus, quæ foret usus.
 Cetera de genere hoc inter quæcumque pretantur,
 Omnia perversa præpostera sunt ratione:
 Nil ideo quoniam natum est in corpore, ut uti
 Possemus; sed quod natum est, id procreat u-
 sum, &c^b.*

SUCH were the sentiments of *Anaxagoras* concerning the first production of animals. And antient philosophers having once made a shift to satisfy themselves upon this article, they never considered the difficulty there is to account, how one animal propagates another; which is a *phæ-nomenon* equally involved and mysterious, and as much beyond the power of matter and motion. For, as Dr. *Cheyne* observes, “ we know very
 “ well, that there is nothing in the *animal*
 “ *machine* but an infinity of branching and wind-
 “ ing canals, filled with liquors of different na-
 “ tures, going the same perpetual round, which
 “ are no more capable of producing the won-
 “ derful fabrick of another animal, than a thing
 “ is of making itself. — And could it be once
 “ proved either by *demonstration*, or by *matter*
 “ *of fact*, that a plant or an animal can be pro-
 “ duced by *mechanism*, *i. e.* nature, or the laws
 “ of motion, the thoughtful parts of mankind
 “ would be easily tempted to believe, that since
 “ the better part was produced by mechanism,

“ the meaner, *i. e.* all the rest of this visible
 “ world, might have been formed the same
 “ way. So that it is a matter of the greatest
 “ consequence, that we have demonstrated, *says*
 “ *Dr. Cheyne*, that neither animals nor vege-
 “ tables can be produced *mechanically*.” But
 I proceed to explain what were *Anaxagoras’s*
 notions with respect to the other article, from
 whence likewise we now clearly demonstrate the
 being and perfections of God. And

As to the origin and formation of the *heavenly bodies*; he does not seem to have apprehended, that an *infinite mind* is the being *who alone stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; who hath therein set a tabernacle for the sun, and appointed the moon for seasons; who maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south, and bringeth out their hosts by number; who doeth great things past finding out, and wonders without number*: I say, *Anaxagoras* does not seem to have lifted up his eyes on high, and to have beheld the being, *who alone by his spirit hath garnished the heavens; who ballances the clouds, and hangeth the earth upon nothing*. He has no apprehension of the contrivance, the wisdom and power of an infinite mind in framing the heavenly bodies, and hanging them up in their different orders and arrangements, as is most commodious for each and best for the whole^d, in

^c *Cheyn. Philosoph. Princip. of Relig.* chap. iii. § 10. p. 130. and 131.

^d *Vid. Newt. Princip. Lib. III. Prop. 8. Corol. 4. p. 372. & Schol. General. p. 482.*

that

that immense space around this little globe; being absolutely ignorant,

*What laws Jehovah to himself prescrib'd,
And of his work the firm foundation made,
When he of things the first design survey'd.*

HE tells us, " that the circumambient æther
" being of a fiery substance, and whirling about
" with great rapidity, it tore from the earth
" stones of a huge bigness; and these being
" mounted up to the higher regions, there
" they were set on fire, and thus having be-
" come so many stars, they are still kept from
" falling downward, by means of the same
" rapid motion of the æther, whereby they
" were at first torn from the earth, and hurled
" up^e." So that, as *D. Laertius* observes, *the
whole heavens are*, in his opinion, *made up of
stones*^e. It should seem however, that the
same power, that carried up those fiery stones,
is not always to support them; for they tell us
that some of them have happened, by I know

^e *S^r Gravesand. Math. Elem.*
translated by *Desagul. Pres.*
p. 8.

^f *Plat. de Placit. Philosoph.*
Lib. II. cap. xiii. p. 888. *Id. in*
Lysand. p. 439. D.

^g *D. Laert. in Anaxag.* p. 36.

I must here take the freedom
to observe, that *Dr. Gregory*,
without any good reason that
appears to me, would assure us,
that *Anaxagoras* had the same
notions about the nature of the
heavenly bodies that are now

held by modern philosophers.
Notum est, says that great man,
dictum illud, quod sæpe usurpa-
runt Anaxagoras ejusque disci-
puli, Archelaus & Euripides;
solem nempe & stellas esse lapides
candentes, aut aureas glebas;
idem etiam sensere Democritus,
Metrodorus, & Diogenes. Qui-
bus verbis nihil aliud intellige-
bant quam corpora gravia, densa
& fixa (saxorum instar) ut ig-
nem sustinere possent. In præ-
fat. ad Astron.

not what miracle, to tumble down again to this earth. And of such wonderful events the world then fancy'd they had reason to be so well assured, that *Anaxagoras* became mighty famous in foretelling the fall of one of these stars, or, as others seem to think, of a stone from the sun, which, they say, happened to light in the country of *Thrace* by *Ægospotamos*, where it was held in great veneration^h.

THIS is *Anaxagoras*'s scheme in explaining the generation and revolution of the heavenly bodies. And the reader cannot but observe, that as it is fully as absurd and unphilosophical, as that *atheistical* scheme given out by *Lucretius*; so it is fully as independent, in all respects, of an infinite mind, and bears as little relation to the perfections of his nature. It carries no less absurdity than the opinion of *Chrysippus*; and *Anaxagoras*, in conceiving it, seems no more to have had a notion of God's being concerned in

^h D. Laert. ubi supra, p. 35. D. Plin. Lib. II. cap. lviii. Plut. in *Lyfand.* ubi supra. *Aristotle* accounts in another manner for the fall of this particular stone. "At the time, he says, when a comet was appearing by night, the stone was carried up by the wind into the air, and fell down in the day time." *Arist. Meteorol.* Lib. I. cap. vii. p. 537. D. Vol. I. But *Philostratus* seems to rest well assured of the truth of the common opinion: In his life of *Apollonius*, wherein, it is thought, he particularly

intends to discredit the *Christian* revelation, he gives full faith to those predictions of *Anaxagoras*, and would from thence vindicate the character of *Apollonius*: "Unjustly, says he, do they charge *Apollonius* with being concerned in the magick art, for his having foreseen several things, and foretold others. It is well known that *Anaxagoras* foretold the falling of some stones from heaven at *Ægospotamos*, which accordingly happened." *Philos. in Vit. Apoll.* Lib. I. cap. ii.

the

the construction of the heavens, than that philosopher had, who knew of no being above matter; and who *kindled the stars from the sea*:
 “The change of fire, *says Chrysippus*, proceeds
 “in this manner: it is turned by the air into
 “water; and the earth subsisting of this, the
 “air exhales; the air being subtilized, the
 “*æther* is produced round about it; and the
 “*stars with the sun are kindled from the sea*.”

THUS it was that *Anaxagoras* accounted for the origin and formation of all animals, and of the heavenly bodies. And as he seems to imagine, that these particular beings came to exist of their own accord, or by mere chance, or necessity, without having any apprehension of the contrivance, and power of an infinite mind employed to produce them; so for my part, I am not able to conceive the least suspicion, that a man of his notions and apprehensions discovered the being of God in *contemplating the nature and order of things in the universe*. It should seem to me, that in the formation and construction of the world, *Anaxagoras* saw no need of the assistance and direction of an intelligent mind, but to fort the *Homœomerics* (which he absurdly maintains^k) the *similar* par-

ⁱ *Plut. de Stoic. Repug. p. 1053. A.*

^k *Lucretius* affords us a very just notion of these *Homœomerics* of *Anaxagoras*, and shews likewise the absurdity of this opinion:

*Nunc Et Anaxagoræ scrutemur homœomorian,
 Quam Græci memorant, nec nostra dicere lingua
 Concedit nobis patrii sermonis egestas.*

ticles of matter, and to bring them together: I am to think, that, after *this*, he apprehended all the several beings of the universe would spring forth of themselves, and by means of one another, without needing the wisdom and power of an infinite mind to form and produce them.

AND indeed in the days of *Socrates*, it was the prevailing opinion, that *heaven* and *earth*, all things were originally brought forth by mere *chance* and *fortune*, without the superintendency of any mind whatsoever¹. And *Aristotle* particularly remarks, “that those who professed

*Sed tamen ipsam rem facile est
exponere verbis,*

*Principium rerum, quam dicit
Homæomeriam:*

*Ossa videlicet e paucillis atque
minutis*

*Ossibus, sic & de paucillis at-
que minutis*

*Visceribus viscus gigni, san-
guenque creari,*

*Sanguinis inter se multis coe-
untibus guttis:*

*Ex aurique putat micis con-
sistere posse*

*Aurum, & de terris terram
concrefcere parvis;*

*Ignibus ex ignem, humorem ex
humoribus esse.*

*Cetera consimili fingit ratione,
putatque.*

— — —
*Linguitur hic tenuis latitandi
copia quædam:*

*Id quod Anaxagoras sibi sumit,
ut omnibus omneis*

*Res putet immixtas rebus lati-
tare: sed illud*

*Apparere unum, cujus sint plu-
ria mista,*

*Et magis in promptu, primaque
in fronte locata:*

*Quod tamen a vera longe ra-
tione repulsum est.*

*Conveniebat enim fruges qua-
que sæpe minutas,*

*Robore cum saxi franguntur,
mittere signum*

*Sanguinis; aut aliquid, nostra
quo corpora aluntur:*

*Cum lapidi lapidem terimus,
manare cruorem.*

*Consimili ratione herbas quo-
que sæpe decebat,*

*Et laticis dulcis guttas, simili-
que sapore*

*Mittere, lanigera quali sunt
ubera lactis, &c.*

Lucret. Lib. I. v. 830.

¹ Plat. in Sophist. p. 265. C.
Vol. I. & de Legib. Lib. X.
p. 889. B. Vol. II.

" two first causes of things, viz. a *passive prin-*
 " *ciple*, and the *cause or author of motion*, are
 " full of confusion and obscurity, do not seem
 " to understand what they say, nor ever almost
 " make use of the causes they assign. *Anaxa-*
 " *goras* himself, says *Aristotle*, only employs an
 " infinite mind as a piece of *machinery* in the
 " construction of the world; when he is at a
 " loss how to account for any particular effect,
 " he then drags it in; but in all other instances,
 " he ascribes the production of things to *every*
 " *thing*, rather than a mind^m. And one can-
 not well imagine, what is the *dignus vindice*
nodus, the particular effect, wherein he would
 find it necessary to drag in the agency of an in-
 finite mind, when he makes *men* and *all ani-*
mals to rise from *hot beds* and *dunghills*; and the
heavenly bodies to be *great stones* torn from the
 earth by the violent rotation or whirling of the
æther.

ONCE it happened that *Socrates* chanc'd to
 hear some one reading a book of *Anaxagoras*,
 wherein it was affirmed, that *an intelligent mind*
is the cause of all things, and the author of their
exact order and regularity. This proved a most
 agreeable and surprizing piece of *news* to *So-*
crates. He immediately conceived some mighty
 hopes, that he should come to understand the
good and *evil* of all things, and particularly per-
 ceive the *reason* of the order and disposition of
 the heavenly bodies. And indeed one should

^m *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iv. p. 844. D. Vol. II.*

think,

think, that in any philosopher, who attributes the formation and constitution of the universe to the efficiency of an *infinite mind*, one may reasonably expect to meet with a beautiful connexion of *effects* and *causes*, with numberless instances of *divine art* and *contrivance*, amazing *power*, exquisite *wisdom*, and wonderful *goodness*. But *Anaxagoras* was so far from apprehending particular beings as the effects of divine power, wisdom, and contrivance, that he assigns their production to such absurd and impertinent causes, that *Socrates* was greatly shock'd, and could not well brook the disappointment. His words are these: " Having one day
" heard some body reading a book of *Anaxa-*
" *goras*, wherein he says, that an infinite mind
" ranges and disposes, and is the cause of, all
" things; I was ravished with joy. — I con-
" ceived some questions to be put to him, about
" the sun, the moon, and other stars, in order
" to know the reason of their several velocities,
" with respect to one another, their revolutions,
" and other affections; and why what each of
" them does is always the best? — So I
" bought his books with a great deal of eager-
" ness; and made it my business to peruse them,
" as soon as possibly I could; that I might
" speedily come to perceive the good and the
" evil of all things. But my mighty hopes
" were all frustrated. So soon as I had made
" a small progress in the perusal, I found the
" author made no use of the intelligent mind:
" nor did he assign any reason for this fine
" order

“ order and construction of things, but attributed the whole to the efficiency of *air*, “ *whirlwinds, waters*, and other causes equally “ absurd and extravagant.” In this manner *Socrates* was disappointed. And it plainly appears, that *Anaxagoras* conceived the formation of the universe, without seeing need for the efficiency of an infinite mind in the production of one single being.

UPON all which I should think it extremely manifest, that this philosopher, the first among the *Grecians* who professed the existence of an infinite mind, can never, with any shew of reason, be suspected to have come to the knowledge of this truth, in *contemplating the nature and order of particular beings in the universe*. And I may here take notice, that the opinion of the ancients, concerning the *equivocal* generation of animals (not to speak of their apprehending, that the heavenly bodies are all animated beings, to which indeed *Anaxagoras* did not agree) which seems universally to have prevailed among all nations°, and whereof the world hath been but lately undeceived, gives us to understand how unfit they were and ill qualified, to investigate the existence of the deity from the works of nature. We have no reason to suspect what *Eusebius* reports from *Sanchoniaton* concerning the *Phœnicians*, who, as he gives it out, accounted for the generation of ani-

° *Plat. in Phæd.* p. 97. C. Lib. I. cap. xiv. p. 9. D. *Macrob. Saturnal.* Lib. VII. cap. xvi.

° *Sext. Emp. Pyrrh. Hypot.* p. 531.

mals in this manner : " Having laid down, *says*
 " *be*, as the principles of the universe, a *dark*
 " *blowing air*, or the *blast of a dark air*, and a
 " *confused dark chaos*; they tell us, that this
 " *blast, breath, or air*, occasioning an *adhesion*,
 " or *complexure*, which is called *LOVE*, *mot*
 " was produced, which some explain to be
 " *slime or mud*, and others to be a *watery putrid*
 " *mixture*. Now from this *mot* or putrid mix-
 " ture, the seeds of all creatures being gene-
 " rated, there were brought forth some *ani-*
 " *mals void of all sensation*; and from these
 " came other *animals capable of perception and*
 " *intelligence*, which at first lay *asleep* and
 " without motion, but when it happened to
 " thunder, were *rouzed by the claps*, and being
 " greatly frightened at the noise, came to move,
 " *male and female*, both in the land and sea.
 " And as for the heavenly bodies, we are told
 " that from the *mot*, without any more ado,
 " *shone forth the sun, the moon, and the stars*." Thus I say, the sentiments of the ancients about the formation of the universe, and particularly the production of animals, lead us quite off from apprehending the being and perfections of God.

It may be judged however, not a little surprising, that the notion of an infinite mind, when once proposed, did not take universally, and come to be embraced by every philosopher.

† Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. I. from Berosus in Fabric. Biblioth.
 cap. x. See the Chaldean ac- Græc. Lib. VI. cap. xii. p. 187.
 count of the origin of things Vol. XIV.

One should think, that every man of common sense and reflection, must have immediately apprehended the justness of the opinion; and yet it does not appear, that in *Anaxagoras's* days any one philosopher favoured it. His scholar *Archelaus* quite neglected it, and professed *heat* and *cold* to be the only first causes in the formation of the world. And so absolutely silent was this philosopher about his master's doctrine of an infinite *mind*, that his scholar again, *Socrates*, during the whole course of his attendance, had not heard so much as a word of it, nor did it reach his ears from any other quarter. This great man was altogether ignorant, that ever such a thing had been talked of in the world; nor did ever the least thought of it at any time enter into his mind, till he was surprized with it, in hearing it proposed in that book of *Anaxagoras*, whereof he was so extremely fond, and wherein he was so exceedingly disappointed. I say, it may seem strange to us, that this doctrine about an infinite mind, was so little regarded by antient philosophers; and that *Anaxagoras*, who happened to advance it, had not, before *Socrates* chanc'd to hear it, so much as one disciple to follow him. Nay it may seem yet more unaccountable, that all philosophers of whatever sect, besides *Socrates* and his followers, do every one despise and reject it. I confess, was I of opinion, that mankind have *innate ideas* and impressions of God, I should be apt to think, that such an event

to suppose, that such an event is

is impossible. But so it stands in *fact*, which is always too stubborn to be crossed by speculation.

WE must here reflect, that those antient philosophers, in a great measure, only minded the study of the natural causes of things; and when they fancied they were able to explain them by *water, fire, air, heat, cold*, and such other absurd conceits, as in this case, they had no temptation to seek after other causes; so when the existence of an infinite mind was proposed, they could not, in their views of the formation of the world, pay any regard to such a being, or ever think, in any instance, of introducing his contrivance, superintendence, and agency: for that upon their scheme of things, they would find it quite needless, and to no purpose. Nor did *Anaxagoras*, as I have just now hinted, who gave out an infinite mind as the first cause that put the confused *jumble* of things in order, ever almost represent this mind to be concerned in the production of any effect; if it was not, perhaps, in some very rare instances, which he was not able to account for otherwise; and what those could be, as I have before remarked, one cannot possibly conjecture. Besides that, the existence of an infinite mind without all sort of body is a notion not quite so obvious and familiar to human understanding: nay, I doubt much, if, in the present state of humanity, any man ever was, or ever will be capable of forming a *direct* and *positive* conception of

such a being¹. It may well be thought, it is no easy matter to apprehend the existence of an infinite mind, when so great a man as *Strabo* gives us so odd a notion of the God of the *Jews*, and pretends to assure us, that “*Moses* said and taught, he is no other but what we call, says he, heaven, and the world, and the nature of the universe².” *Celsus* too declares himself of the same opinion³. And it should seem it was pretty universal; for the *Satyrist* tells us,

Nil præter nubes & cæli lumen adorant⁴.

Thus when we reflect, it is extremely difficult, or rather impossible to conceive a *positive* notion of an infinite mind; and that all the apprehensions of the antients about the origin of the world, and the nature and formation of its particular parts, made such a being of no consequence in the universe, and led them quite off from falling into any the least suspicion of his existence; we need not much wonder, that ancient philosophers did not attend to an infinite mind, when the doctrine was proposed; nor attributed the formation and disposition of the

¹ Deus totus est sui similis, totus oculus, totus auris, totus cerebrum, totus brachium, totus vis sentiendi, intelligendi, & agendi; sed more minime humano, more minime corporeo, more nobis profus incognito. Ut cæcus ideam non habet colorum, sic nos ideam non habemus modo-

rum quibus Deus sapientissimus sentit & intelligit omnia. *Neuor. Princip. Lib. III. Schol. General.* p. 482.

² *Strab. Lib. XVI. p. 760. D.*

³ *Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. I. p. 18. Lib. V. p. 234.*

⁴ *Juv. Satyr. 14. 797.*

world to his contrivance and agency. In short, where people have little or no knowledge of the nature and relations of things, or do not apprehend them in that light, which sets them forth as *such* effects or productions as must lead one to perceive the efficiency of an infinite mind; it seems certain to me, that the belief of the deity will go far better and easier by *tradition*, a means fitted to the capacity and condition of the bulk of mankind; and will be greatly darkened, or come to be quite laid aside by enquiry and *argumentation*, which is the course whereby philosophers pretend to take up and hold their opinions. But to return;

Ut vero errores, qui invaluerunt, quique in æternum invalituri sunt, alii post alios (*si mens sibi permittatur*) ipsi se corrigerent, vel ex vi intellectus propria, vel ex auxiliis atque adminiculis dialecticæ, *nulla prorsus suberat spes*, propterea quod notiones rerum primæ, quas mens haustu facili & supino excipit, recondit, atque accumulât, (unde reliqua omnia fluunt) vitiosæ sint, & confusæ, & temere a rebus abstractæ; neque minor sit in secundis & reliquis libido & inconstantia. Ex quo fit ut universa ista ratio humana, qua utimur quoad inquisitionem naturæ, non bene congesta & ædificata sit, sed tanquam moles aliqua magnifica sine fundamento, &c. *Nov. Organ. in init. Libri.*

Un de plus grans esprits de l'ancienne Rome s'avisa d'examiner les opinions des philoso-

phes sur la nature divine. Il disputa pour & contre avec beaucoup d'attention. Qu'en arriva-t-il? C'est qu'au bout du compte, il se trouva athée, ou peu s'en salut, ou qu'au moins il n'évita ce grand changement que parce qu'il eut plus de déférence pour l'autorité, de ses ancêtres, que pour ses lumières philosophiques. Ne trouvant rien de solide hors de cette autorité, il y revint comme le pigeon de Noé rentra dans l'arche, parce qu'il ne trouvoit ailleurs où mettre le pied. Si vous voulez être assez charitable pour croire que ce grand esprit de Rome a parlé sincèrement de sa déférence pour la tradition, je ne m'y oppose pas, quoi que je sache qu'il est fort suspect d'athéisme à saint Augustin. *Contin. des Pens. divers. chap. cv. p. 499.*

I PRESUME it is pretty manifest, that the knowledge *Anaxagoras* had of the existence of an infinite mind, was no acquisition of his own industry and reasoning. And as for *Socrates*, it is plain from what I have just now hinted, that neither did he carry his knowledge of this article, as the reward of his rational inquiries: it was a thing quite *new, untought, unheard of* by *Socrates*, till he chanc'd to meet with it in *Anaxagoras's* book. And, what is most surprizing, this doctrine, that so much stands to reason, did not long survive *Socrates*. It seems indeed to have been held by *Xenophon* and *Plato*; but whether any other maintained it, I do not remember any where to have observed. It appears, however, pretty certain, that among the *Platonists* the belief of this doctrine came very soon to be quite extinguished, and did not again happen to be revived till after the publication of the *gospel*; which cannot but affect one with a very mean opinion of human understanding, and shew the necessity of some *extraordinary* information*. In the mean while, as for those philosophers, who professed the existence of an infinite mind; perhaps our taking a view of their sentiments, in reference to some things that nearly concern this article, may help us to a yet fuller prospect of the extent of human understanding, in letting us see, *whether* there is any likelihood that these philosophers, being only *prevented* by the information, were of

* Vid. *Euseb. Præp. Evang.* the following quotation from Lib. XIV. cap. iv. p. 726. And Mr. *Arnould*.

themselves

themselves able to have discovered the existence of the deity? And I suppose it will be found;

THAT the express opinion of these philosophers about the extent of human powers, or how far the bulk of mankind are able to apprehend the being of a God; that the accounts they give us concerning the formation of the world; and the uncertainty they confess they are in, with respect to what they propose about the deity; do plainly shew us, that these very philosophers, who were taught to believe the existence of an infinite mind, *were not able*, even after they had attended to this notion, *to make it good* by convincing arguments, or to give a distinct *rational* account of their *faith*: upon which we shall find it necessary to conclude, that rude uncultivated man, altogether a stranger to abstracted reasoning, is by infinite odds less capable.

THUS however fond *Socrates* and his followers were of the notion of an infinite mind, and how beautifully soever they represent the first mover and cause of all things; yet they are sensible how hard the task is, to arrive at the knowledge of such a being, and confess it is impossible to explain it to the bulk of mankind. *It is no easy matter*, says *Xenophon*, *to discover what the Gods are; it is not lawful to enquire, nor indeed does it become us*. *Plato* indeed differs from *Xenophon* in the point of the *lawfulness* and *decency* of this enquiry²; but he avouches

¹ *Xenoph. Epist. ad. Æschin.*
p. 1000. B.

² *Plat. de Legib. Lib. VII.*
p. 821. A.

the hardship one is put to in searching out the existence of the deity, and strongly represents it by a fine *simile* of one's passing through a rapid river. "Were we three, *says he*, you "*Clinias, Megillus*, and myself, to cross a river "*that runs impetuously; if I, as being the* "*youngest and most vigorous, and having ex-* "*perience of many waters, should thus address* "*you: It belongs to me, leaving you safe on* "*this side, to attempt it first by myself, that I* "*may see, whether it is passable to old people, es-* "*pecially of your strength; and if it shall ap-* "*pear so, then to call upon you, and to direct* "*your passage by my experience: but if it shall* "*seem unpassable to such as you, the danger is* "*over in my person: in all this, methinks, I* "*should speak as it becomes me. Now, the* "*point we are about to handle, is attended with* "*vast difficulties, that are perhaps unfurmount-* "*able to men of your reach. And therefore* "*to prevent that perplexity and disorder, which* "*those questions, to which you are not ac-* "*customed, that must be asked upon this oc-* "*casion, may put you in, and whereby you* "*may become uneasy, in exposing yourselves* "*indecently; I am of opinion, that, leaving you* "*to hear what passes without hazard, I ought* "*both to propose and answer those questions* "*myself; till I shall have concluded the whole* "*matter, and made it appear, that mind is prior* "*to body."* In this manner *Plato* sets forth

² *Plat. de Legib. Lib. X. p. 892. D.*

the difficulty one is put to in coming to the knowledge of a first intelligent mover. And unless we suppose him guilty of great *indecenty*, and not to understand how to preserve the justness of characters; since he introduces *Clinias* and *Megillus* as wholly ignorant of this principle, not able of themselves, without the assistance of others to discern it, it should seem, that the existence of such a being was in *Plato's* days far from being commonly known even among men of learning, and that those who held it, were fully sensible, how difficult it is to apprehend it.

WHETHER *Plato* has fulfilled his task, and demonstrated the existence of the deity, I will leave to the reader's judgment after he has taken the trouble to peruse what *Plato* advances to that purpose: and you will be pleased likewise to consider, whether *Plato* has in view any other being than the *soul of the world*, which one has reason to suspect, is, in the present case, all the God he contends for. I shall only here observe, when he is about to conclude his argument, he comes to consider in what manner *that* mind, which he supposes to be the first mover, communicates motion to the heavenly bodies; whether by animating them, as our souls do our bodies; or by making use of another body, such as fire, or air, moves them as one body impells another; or whether this mind, being itself void of body, causes them to move by some other wonderful powers inherent to its nature? And leaving this question wholly
indetermined,

indetermined, he shuts up the whole, without seeming to know, whether the formation and construction of the universe, is to be attributed to *one* mind only, or to *many*^b. Nor need we be surprized at *Plato's* expressing himself thus doubtfully; for in another place, he plainly tells us, he knows nothing *certain* about the deity, and can only pretend to report what is *probable*.

“ If, *says he*, among so many things, that so
 “ many have said concerning the Gods, and the
 “ origin and formation of the universe, we are
 “ not able to afford you a fully accurate and
 “ consistent relation of things, you are not to
 “ wonder; but must be satisfied, if we shall
 “ advance what is feasible; it being remem-
 “ bered that I who discourse, and you who
 “ judge, are of human nature. So that when
 “ you come to be entertained with a likely ac-
 “ count of such things, it is decent to demand
 “ nothing further^c.” In which *Plato* still insinuates the difficulties that attend this argument, and that mankind are not naturally able to carry their knowledge beyond probability, especially in what relates to the formation and disposition of all things by an intelligent first mover. And from the particular account which *Plato* gives us of the formation of the universe, one may judge what good reason he had to think, that in this article he could pretend to *no certainty*.

HE conceives, “ that the first, or the su-
 “ preme ungenerated mind comprehends in his

^b *Plat. de Legib.* p. 898. D. ^c *Id. in Tim.* p. 29. C. V. III.

intellect

“ intellect the ideas of all beings whatsoever, (or
 “ attends to those ideas contained in a second mind
 “ next to himself) and that upon this intellectual
 “ pattern he forms another mind, made up of
 “ three sorts of substances, whereof one is in-
 “ divisible and always the same, another is di-
 “ visible like matter or body, and the third is
 “ a thing compounded of the other two; and
 “ this second (or third) mind being thus formed,
 “ it is every where diffused or distributed in such
 “ particular proportions^d; after which it is
 “ cloathed with a spherical body, which it en-
 “ livens and animates. Now this second (or
 “ third) mind with its body, *Plato tells us*, is
 “ the world or the universe, which can be only
 “ one in number; and he calls it, an intelligent
 “ and happy God, self-sufficient and wanting
 “ nothing, and subject to no change; and the
 “ supreme or first God seeing it to be his own
 “ image (or the image of the second God) he
 “ greatly delights in it. But we are told fur-

^d See those proportions briefly explained, and their meaning accounted for by *Macrobius in Somn. Scip. Lib. II. cap. ii.* He particularly says, p. 99. *Timæus igitur, Platonis in fabricanda mundi anima consilium divinitatis enuncians, ait illam per hos numeros fuisse contextam, qui & a pari & ab impari cubum, id est, perfectionem soliditatis efficiunt: non quia aliquid significaret illam habere corpoream; sed ut possit universitatem animando penetrare, & mundi solidum corpus implere, per numeros soliditatis effecta est.*

And at the bottom of the next page he observes: *Ergo mundi anima, quæ ad motum hoc quod videmus universitatis corpus impellit, contexta numeris musicam de se creantibus concinentiam, necesse est ut sonos musicos de motu, quem proprio impulsu præstat, efficiat; quorum originem in fabrica suæ contextationis invenit.*

^e *Tatian* so far agrees with *Plato*, that he professes a soul of the world, and attributes its formation to God. *Tat. Orat. ad Græc. p. 19; 47, 50.*

“ ther,

“ *ther*, that in order to carry on the universe
 “ towards it highest perfection, or to bring it as
 “ near to its pattern as possible, and thereby
 “ render it eternal; the supreme God forms
 “ some particular beings, the *solar* and the *pla-*
 “ *netary* bodies, that are all of them animated,
 “ and so many Gods, whereof our earth is the
 “ first and most ancient. *Upon which Plato*
 “ *takes occasion to mention those Gods that are call-*
 “ *ed dæmons; and here indeed he tells us, we*
 “ have no good proof for the existence of such
 “ deities; but since antient times have declared
 “ for them, he is of opinion, they ought not
 “ to be rejected ^f.”

AFTER this manner these beings superior to man, or these inferior Gods being formed, the supreme mind calls them together, and, as *Plato* reports, is pleased thus to address them;

“ YE Gods of Gods^g; all the works I have
 “ made are indissoluble as much as I please.
 “ Indeed whatever has been joined together, is
 “ of a nature capable of being dissolved: but
 “ it becomes not a good being to destroy what
 “ has no evil in it. You have been brought

^f *Plat. in Timæ. p. 30, 40.*

^g *Julian* the emperor, who was so much a philosopher, and a man of reason, that he had formed a scheme to bring about the extinction of the *Christian* revelation, inclines to think, that these Gods of Gods, to whom the supreme God addresses himself, are the eternal ideas, which he conceives to be so many

distinct intelligent beings; and that they are called Gods of Gods, because being themselves invisible and intelligible Gods, they are the original patterns or archetypes, upon which the sun, and the other heavenly bodies, that are visible or sensible Gods, were formed. *Cyrril. cont. Julian. p. 65. Vol. VI.*

“ forth, and consequently you are not immortal, and absolutely indissoluble: however you shall never be dissolved, nor shall you partake of death; my will being a stronger bond to ascertain your immortality, than all *that* where-with you have been bound at your birth. But hearken to what I say: there are yet three sorts of animals to be formed, without which the world would not be perfect; for to make it perfect, it ought to contain animals of every species; but if I should form them myself, they would be equal to the Gods: that they may therefore prove mortal, and the universe be made complete, do you go according to nature, and form them yourselves, imitating my power in forming you. And as for *that* part of them, I mean of those, who will always incline to reverence *justice* and *you*, which ought to be of kin to the immortal Gods, which is called divine, and is that which will govern in them; *that* is the part which I will provide and furnish myself: but as for the rest, by uniting to this immortal part that which is mortal, do you form and bring forth animals; and affording them necessary aliments, raise them up and make them grow, and when they are dissolved, receive them again into your bosom.

“ THE supreme mind having thus spoke, he repaired to the bowl, wherein he had before mixed the ingredients for making up the soul of the world; and taking what remained of this mixture, whereof he some-
 “ what

“ what altered the proportions, in order to render it some degrees inferior to *that* of the Gods, he thereof formed as many sorts of souls as there are stars, and assigned to each star such a particular sort^b. And having made this distribution, he left it to the inferior Gods to form mortal bodies; and committing to their care, whatever was farther necessary for the human soul, he laid it upon them to govern and superintend mankind, in the best manner they were capable of promoting their happiness, that no man might be miserable but by his own faultⁱ.”

Now this account of the formation of the universe, gives us plainly to understand, what good reason *Plato* had to confess, that he knew *nothing certain* concerning the deity with respect to such articles. And I am apt to think, that the meanest philosopher *now a days* will judge his whole scheme not a little absurd and ridiculous. But a *Plato* left to himself, having no foreign *guide* to direct him in his notions about the deity, is forced to turn *poet*; upon some scraps of *tradition* he warms his fancy, and gives free scope to a raving imagination. As *Lactantius* observes, he was rather a *dreamer*

^b I understand διῶλε ψυχὰς ἰσάριθμους τοῖς ἀστέροις, ἑκάστη δ' ἑκάστη πρὸς ἑκάστον, to signify, not so many individual souls, but so many different sorts of souls. And herein, I conceive, I am justified by *Plato's* expli-

cation afterwards, when he says: Ἐπειτα τὰς μὲν εἰς ἥλιον, τὰς δ' εἰς σελήνην, τὰς δ' εἰς τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα ὄργανα ἔχουσιν.

ⁱ *Plat. in Timæ. p. 41, and 42.*

about God than any thing else^k. The judicious reader will not fail to make several reflections upon this account of things, that will shew him the natural scantiness of the human mind, and to what *senseless* inconsistencies the greatest ancient philosophers (even while he believes the existence of God) is exposed, when he would be knowing in what concerns the deity, and has nothing to guide him beyond the compass of his own understanding. I cannot but think that *Socrates* acted a most wise and prudent part, when he no longer followed the course of other philosophers (for in his youth he was so employed) and gave over inquiring into the nature and origin of the universe, and by what necessary causes the heavenly beings were generated. He certainly passes a true judgment, when he declares, that *those who embark in such enquiries are playing the fool egregiously*. It was a wonder to him, that *men did not perceive, it is impossible for mankind to search out things of that nature*^l. In the mean time, it may be remarked, that *Plato*, in his account of such things, represents mankind in the very circumstances, wherein, having no better information than their own, I do all along apprehend, they will certainly conceive themselves.

HE sets forth the *heavenly bodies as so many animated beings and Gods, upon whose care and government mankind depend. This, I alledge,*

^k *Somniauerat enim Deum, non cognouerat. Iust. Lib. V. cap. xiv.*

^l *Xenoph. Memorab. Lib. I. p. 710. A. Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. XV. cap. lxii.*

will be the undoubted opinion of creatures left wholly to themselves. I confess *Plato* goes further, and professes the existence of an infinite mind as the invisible first mover and author of all. But this, I must still say, is a point of knowledge, which in my apprehension, lyes far beyond the reach of mankind, whilst they have no foreign instruction; especially in that rude and uncultivated state wherein I have supposed them. *Plato* was taught, *there is a God*: he believed the proposition; and what he thus received without demonstration, he would sometimes seem to go about to demonstrate to the rest of mankind. But I leave it to the judgment of every thinking person, whether a man of *Plato's* notions, as he explains them in his account of the formation of the universe, can be thought capable of leading either himself or other people, by the visible effects to the invisible first cause? To me, I own, the clean contrary appears fully manifest. And if a man of *Plato's* extraordinary genius, of his penetrating wit, and great compass of thought, was not able to discern any certain series and connexion of things that could lead him or any man to the knowledge of that infinite mind, whom we call God; what can we expect from the rest of philosophers^m? What can we expect from the

^m Il faut avouer que Platon instruit par Socrate a dit de fort belles choses de la nature divine, quoique mêlées d'erreurs, comme lors qu'il enseigne que ce

sont des Dieux inferieurs au Dieu souverain, qui ont créé le monde. Mais ce qui est remarquable est, que ces beaux sentimens de Platon, qui don-

herd of mankind? "Surely all men are vain
 "by nature and are ignorant of God, and could
 "not know him that is, by the good things that
 "are seen, neither consider by the works the
 "work-master. But they thought the fire,
 "or the wind, or the swift air, or the course of
 "the stars, or the raging water, or the lights of
 "heaven, to be the governors of the world and
 "Gods."

nent une grande idée de Dieu, n'ont esté qu'une lumière passagere, qui s'est eclipsée bientôt après, & qui n'a paru de nouveau par de nouveaux Disciples de ce philosophe, que dans le tems que la prédiction de l'Evangile avoit repandu par toute la terre ces grandes vérités de la nature divine, & que l'autorité de Jesus Christ les avoit persuadées à toutes sortes de personnes. Cela se voit par les livres de Ciceron de la nature des Dieux. Car comme il estoit du parti des nouveaux Academiciens, qui faisoient profession de ne s'attacher à aucune secte, mais de choisir de chacune ce qui leur paroissoit plus vraisemblable, ce qui les obligeoit à les étudier toutes, il n'y a point de livres dont on puisse mieux apprendre quelles estoient les opinions des philosophes païens touchant la divinité qui estoient le plus en vogue. Or quoi qu'il eût une estime toute particulière de Platon, il fait si peu d'état de ce qu'il a dit de Dieu, qu'il ne daigne pas l'examiner avec quelque soin; mais il le fait re-

jetter par un des personnages de son dialogue, comme une opinion toute-a-fait inintelligible: *Quod Plato sine corpore Deum esse censet, id quale esse possit intelligi non potest.* Et en effet les philosophes, dont il explique les sentimens plus au long, qui sont les Epicuriens & les Stoiciens, convenoient en cela, qu'ils vouloient qu'il y eût plusieurs Dieux, & qu'ils fussent corporels. Et c'est l'opinion, qui avoit pris le dessus dans la philosophie des païens, il y avoit long-tems. Ils n'estoient donc pas propres à donner la vraie idée de Dieu à ceux mêmes, qu'ils instruisoient. Et on pourroit encore moins regarder leurs instructions comme des *moïens suffisans* pour faire connoître Dieu à une infinité de personnes, qui ne les consultoient point sur cela, mais s'arrestoient à adorer les fausses divinités du paganisme. *Arnauld 2. Denonc. du peché Philosoph. Art. 12. p. 93.*

Wisd. chap. xiii. 1, 2. Old Translation. Tous les Gentils ont esté fort satisfaits de ce que les pluies rendoient leurs terres fé-

I AM sensible that the antients, in going about to prove, *there is a God*, or *there are Gods*, do make use of some arguments, which, as they are now managed, do plainly lead us to apprehend the existence of an infinite mind. But it is to be observed, that those very arguments under the direction of the antients, are so far from leading us to the same conclusion, that they would only shew us the existence of those particular beings, whom they imagined to be Gods°. Nor do I know any one antient philosopher

condes. Ils ont reconnu qu'ils tiroient de la variété des saisons de grands avantages pour la récolte des fruits, dont ils avoient besoin pour leur nourriture, & ils ont eu de la joie d'avoir par là de quoi satisfaire à leurs besoins, & à leurs plaisirs. Mais ne faut-il pas avouer que les tenebres, que le péché avoit répandues sur le genre humain, estoient si grandes, qu'il y a une infinité de ces payens, qui n'ont jamais eu le moindre pensée de s'en tenir obligés au vrai Dieu créateur du ciel & de la terre? Ou ils ne pensoient qu'à jouir de ces biens sans se mettre en peine à qui ils en avoient obligation: Ou ils bornoient leur reconnaissance au Soleil, & à la Lune, & aux autres corps célestes, dont ils avoient fait des Dieux, parce qu'ils les croioient auteurs de ce biens temporels par leurs influences: Ou ils reveroient, comme les divinitez, les hommes, qui leur avoient appris à se les procurer par leur

travail. *Arnauld. ubi sup. Art. 15. p. 126.*

° *Plut. de Placit. Philosoph. Lib. I. cap. vi. p. 879.*

Si spectentur res, quæ ex quotidiana hominum omnium vita necessario cognoscuntur, & quæ semper eadem per omnia secula fuerunt; non dubitarim veteribus eandem eorum ac nobis tribuere cognitionem, quæ ex quotidianis experimentis hauritur: Talia sunt *cibus, vestitus, mors, vita*, & alia innumera. Verum ubi opus est ratiocinatione, ut notio quæpiam efformetur, præsertim si paulo plures propositiones amplectatur ratiocinatio; non opinor tutum esse, veteribus ea de re silentibus tribuere eandem notionem ac nobis, quia facillime fieri potest ut illa ratiocinatione usi non sint, adeoque eam notionem non efformarint. Potuerunt veteres de consecrariis quæ deducimus, ex iis quæ perspecta habebant non cogitare; quod non intelligo dumtaxat de consecrariis verisimili-

that

that appears to have it only in view, by any particular series of reasoning, to make out the existence of an infinite mind. And no doubt it is extremely odd, that none of those philosophers, who profess to believe the existence of such a being, do ever undertake an argument, wherein, one might have expected, they would have engaged with great fondness and the utmost application; but in all their attempts to prove *there is a God*, do either conclude in the *soul of the world*, or in the common opinion of a *plurality of Gods*.

I do not here take upon me to determine, whether or no in their reasoning they quite laid aside the notion of our God, or of an infinite mind: I would only have it remarked, that those who professed this supreme deity, do never mean to prove his existence in particular; and that, if at any time they attend to him, while they are shewing *there is a God*, they always bring along with him those other beings, whom they esteem to be Gods, and whom, one is tempted to think, they have especially in view. From whence, in all fair construction, it must be reckoned, that they no more mean to make out, that *that* being, whom we adore as the glorious maker of the universe, is God; than that the soul of the world, is God; or that the luminaries of heaven, are Gods. And can it ever be thought, that those men by the same train

bus, sed & de prorsus necessariis. in rebus manifestis. *Cleric. Art.*
 Neque hoc potuit tantum fieri, *Critic. Part II. cap. ii. Sect. 14.*
 sed etiam persæpe factum est § 2. Tom. I.

of reasoning, whereby they apprehend that the world and the heavenly bodies are Gods, were led to perceive the existence of an infinite mind? This, so far as I can judge, makes a strong proof, that those philosophers had only heard of the existence of such a being; and giving credit to the report, they were sometimes pleased to take notice of him among the rest of their deities.

WITH me, I confess, it is beyond doubt, that to pretend to find out or demonstrate the being of God *a priori*, is a very fruitless attempt. I cannot help resting assured, that the only evidences whereby a man left to himself can come to the knowledge of the great contriver and framer of the world, must arise from the works which that sovereign architect has effected. And thus the only way, that reason can teach men to know God, being from considering his works; of necessity those works must first be rightly understood, or they must first be apprehended in a certain particular light, before they can direct one to distinguish the only true cause and author of the universe. And let me have leave to say, that heathen philosophers, or men of their sentiments about the nature of things, seem to have no *data*, no known truths or principles, upon which they can be enabled to make the discovery.

¶ Deum cognoscimus solummodo per proprietates suas & attributa, & per sapientissimas & optimas rerum structuras, &

causas finales; veneramur autem & colimus ob dominium. *Newt. Princip. Lib. III. Schol. General. p. 482.*

IN

IN this age and part of the world, we rest assured, that no species of *animals*, not the meanest insect, not the lowest plant, ever was or can be the *mere production of a humid, warm, earthy substance*, nor indeed of any sort of matter what way soever corrupted and *modified*: it appears manifest to us, that lifeless stupid matter, only capable of being moved by external impulse, can at no rate prove the cause of such surprizingly curious *machines*, that are effects altogether above the power of *mechanicks*, or the blind laws of motion⁹. With us likewise the persuasion is most firm and undoubted, that the *heavenly bodies* are by no means animated, self-moving, intelligent beings; we apprehend them to be vastly great globes of matter, void of all thought and consciousness, in themselves quite senseless and unactive, and moving only by the force and direction of a complicated external impulse. *In this manner* we are affected. And when we thus apprehend the nature of animals, and of the heavenly bodies, we seem to have some known

⁹ Nihil in vita utilius, aut animo rerum ultimam, hoc est, uni Jovi rerum omnium auctori cognitam, originem scrutanti gratius inveniri posse confido, quam invenisse & agnovisse nostram animantium originem ab ipso Jove repeti debere.

— Vires cordis corporisque medullaris simul sunt ortæ, simulque vigent; animalque proinde nullum unquam *mechanice* producitur. *Pitcairn. Dissert. de Circ. Sang. in Genit. &c.*

p. 118. 120. Hinc mihi persuasi animalia ista, sive corporis animati fabricam a Jove fuisse conditam, nulla theorematum *mechanicorum* habita ratione; eamque vi supereminentis peritiæ, motusque leges nostras longissime superantis, excitari, *Id. in Epist. Archimed. ad Gelon.* Here likewise this learned Man professes the same opinion with respect to the motions of the heavenly bodies, and declares they are above the laws of *mechanism*.

principles in which we can fix our thoughts, and from whence we may deduce a clear connexion of the undoubted consequences. Thus,

FROM the wonderful structure, the exquisite oeconomy of the animal system, wherein we see an infinite number, and endless variety of parts and organs, ranged, disposed, and adjusted with a fitness and delicacy beyond admiration; from the stupendous magnitude, the amazing order, situation, and motion of the heavenly bodies, hanging together in a boundless space, and in their several distances and revolutions mutually affecting one another by established laws, that tend to the preservation, the beauty, and well-being of the whole; I say, from the construction and arrangement, the relations and proportions, of such heaps of lifeless matter in heaven and earth, united in greater and smaller parcels, making up a most glorious system of things, infinitely grand and magnificent; we are led to apprehend the contrivance, the power, the wisdom, and goodness of an immensely great being, *who is over all, God blessed for ever.* Thus far we can truly say, *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the animal world sheweth his handy-work.*

Hinc mundus existit divinæ sapientiæ, omnipotentia, & bonitatis theatrum, gloriæque immensa & infinita palatium. Keil. Astronom. Lect. IV. p. 43. And with what indulgence, in every instance, has the great architect provided for the com-

mon ease and comfort of the animal world? *Sublatâ atmosphæâ, immediate ante solis occasum splendidissime luceret Sol, at in momento, cum occidit, statim densissimæ ingruerent tenebræ: tamque subitaneus noctis adventus, & a luce in tenebras transi-*

BUT let us put ourselves in the condition of antient philosophers, and with their prevailing notions about us, let us look up to the heavens, and apprehend those luminaries above, to be animated self moving beings, exquisitely wise and intelligent, guiding their own motions, and imparting their benign influences to this lower world, whereby they cherish our earth; and from its putrid parts bring forth every species of plants and animals; let these be our undoubted notions. And in this scheme of things, or while we thus understand the nature of what we

tus parum hominibus commodus esset. Sed per atmosphæram fit, ut etsi nulli directi ad nos pervenire possunt solares radii, reflexa tamen luce per aliquod tempus fruamur, & non nisi paulatim obrepunt tenebræ. — Similiter mane, cum sol ad decimum octavum ab horizonte gradum pervenerit, incipit atmosphæram illuminare, cælumque luce perfundere, quæ usque ad solis ortum continuo crescit. Id. *ibid.* Lect. XXI. p. 293. And (says Dr. Nieuwentyt in his *Relig. Philosoph.* Contempl. 24. Sect. xiv. p. 759. Vol. III.) "Let an atheist judge again, "Whether it is without a de- "terminate end and purpose, "that the rays of the sun pas- "sing from a thinner into a "thicker medium, are refracted "and turned away from their "true course, in order to pro- "duce the *twilight* of evening "and morning; whereas other- "wise upon the setting of the "sun in all places, a bright "day would be immediately

"changed into a pitch-dark
"Night? And it may be ea-
"sily perceived, that it is so
"ordered on purpose to be use-
"ful to men, the organs of
"whose sight would be very
"much prejudiced, if the tran-
"sition from much light to
"much darkness were made
"all at once." A beautiful
Phænomenon! shewing the won-
derful kindness of a provident
being, that every day appears,
and by most people is every day
neglected. And "he certainly
"deserves not to enjoy the blef-
"sings of his *eye-sight*, whose
"mind is so deprav'd, as not
"to acknowledge the beauty
"and wisdom of the author of
"his nature, in the *ravishing*
"and *astonishing* structure of this
"origin," that in all its *habi-*
tudes to external objects is so
well adapted to guard us from
danger and to secure our safety
and comfort. *Chryn. Philosoph.*
Princip. of Relig. chap. vi,
§ 45. p. 353.

behold in heaven and earth; what are the first principles in which we can rest our thoughts, and from whence we may go on reasoning, till we come to perceive an infinite mind? *The plants and animals that inhabit and beautify this lower world, totally owe their production and subsistence to the heavenly bodies*: here we can have no argument for the existence of the deity. *The heavenly bodies are self-moving intelligent beings, kind beneficent Gods, that bless and govern the world*: here we are in view of self-moving, wise and benign deities, who dwell and shine glorious in the heavens, who give birth to the vegetable and animal world, and superintend our lower habitation. Whither now shall we go — Where are the *data*? — Where is the known ground, on which one can set one's foot, and from whence we may proceed towards an infinite mind? If it shall enter into our head to apprehend heaven and earth, the whole visible universe of things as one entire body; the fancy may then, perhaps, strike us, that this one body of the universe is animated by one universal soul, as our little bodies are with ours: upon which we might be engaged to profess with *Aratus*,

— μετὰ ἧ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγχαί,
 Πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθρώπων ἀγοραί μετ' ἧ θάλασσα,
 Καὶ λιμένες πάντῃ ἧ Διὸς πλήσομεθα πάντες.

But as for our coming to perceive or discern a *mind*, infinitely greater than the heavenly bodies, than the whole universe, independent of all

all matter, the contriver, former, preserver, and governor, of this stupendous piece of architecture; I do not see, that, while we have such mistaken apprehensions of the nature of things, we are at all capable of the discovery, or that we have principles sufficient to enable us to make it.

So that the opinions of antient philosophers about the nature of the heavenly bodies, and their *energy* upon this lower world, seem to have put it out of their power to discern a course of arguments, which *now teach us* to apprehend the existence of the deity^f. Nor indeed, as I have already hinted, do those philosophers ever go about to prove the existence of this being in particular; but in all their reasoning to shew there is a God, do either conclude in the *soul of the world*, or in the *divinity of the heavenly bodies*.

PLATO in his 10th book of *laws*, like a great

^f In primis causa errorum omnium philosophis hæc fuit; quod rationem mundi, quæ totam sapientiam continet, non comprehenderunt. Ea vero sensu proprio, & interna intelligentia non potest comprehendere, quod illi sine doctore per seipsos facere voluerunt; itaque in varias sibi quæque contrarias sententias inciderunt, ex quibus exitum non haberent, & in eodem luto (sicut comicus ait) hæsitaverunt: scilicet assumptionibus eorum non respondente ratione; cum assumpserint quidem vera, sed

quæ affirmari, probarique non possent, sine scientia veritatis rerumque cœlestium, quæ, ut sæpe jam dixi, non potest esse in homine, nisi Deo docente percepta. — Quare necesse est omnes philosophiæ sectas alienas esse a veritate, quia homines errant, qui eas constituerunt; nec ullum fundamentum aut firmitatem possunt habere, quæ nullis divinarum vocum fulciuntur oraculis. *Last. Institut. Lib. VII. cap. ii. vid. Lib. III. cap. iii.*

and

and good man, takes upon him to defend against the *atheists* and *bigots* of his time, these three grand points of religion, namely, *there are Gods*; that *this world is under their care and government*; and that *their favour is not to be gained by prayers and sacrifices, without inward purity and righteousness of soul*. As to the first of these, which is the only article we are here concerned in, he makes *Clinias* express himself in this manner: *The earth, says he, the sun, all the stars, and the seasons so beautifully adorned and distinguished by years and months, do proclaim there are Gods; and Greeks and Barbarians do every where bear witness to the same truth*^t. Now these are *topics*, especially the visible world, from whence we fetch arguments, that convincingly prove the existence of the deity. But does *Clinias* apprehend the *earth*, the *sun*, and the others *stars*, in the same light wherein we *now* regard them? Or does he once attempt to improve them to the same purposes? Far from it. He only instances in these beings, in order to shew *in fact*, there are Gods; or he only means to say, that these beings in proclaiming their own divinity, do thereby give us to understand, there are Gods really existing. Upon which *Plato* takes notice, that in this article they are opposed by a set of philosophers, who maintain that the *stars* are only *earth* and *stones*. But *Plato* does not stick at declaring those philosophers impious. He observes that mankind suck in with their very milk

^t *Plat. de Legib. Lib. X. p. 886. A. Vol. II.*

the knowledge of these deities; that all along as they grow up they see them worshipped; and *Greeks* and *Barbarians* do every where adore them^v. But leaving these Gods, for whose existence they have *ocular* demonstration, (against which however the followers of *Anaxagoras* loudly excepted, as being, in their opinion, only lifeless *stones*) he goes about to explain the existence of another God, who is not liable to such an objection; and pretending to prove by some poor *metaphysical* reasoning, that *mind is older than body, and the author of motion*, he at length concludes in the *soul of the world*: and being still fond of the divinity of the heavenly bodies, he takes occasion to add, that the *sun*, the *moon*, and all the *stars* are likewise each of them animated with a soul, and therefore so many Gods. And whoever, says he, *confesses thus much, will be endure to bear that all things are not full of Gods**? This, if I am not greatly mistaken, is the most considerable, if not the only place in *Plato's* writings, wherein he professes to prove the existence of a God: and we see for what purposes he introduces the heavenly bodies in his argument against *atheism*; and that his other reasoning is far from pointing at the existence of an *infinite mind*^v.

I SHALL next instance in *Xenophon*, another scholar and friend of *Socrates*. This philosopher, who seems in every respect to have

^v *Plat. de Legib. Lib. X. C. p. 889.*

p. 887. D.

^v *Vid. Plat. in Cratyl. p. 412.*

^z *Id. ibid. p. 896. C. p. 898. D. p. 413. Vol. I.*

filled up the character of a fine gentleman, a man of great politeness, and sincerely religious; and who in my opinion, is the gravest and chastest writer among antient philosophers, and can never sufficiently be admired; I say, this great man makes indeed extremely fine and handsome reflections upon the *structure of the human body*, upon the *powers of the human mind*, upon the *provision made for the support and comfort of human life*, and upon the *revolution and influences of the heavenly bodies*, in order to make good the argument against *atheists*, but you will plainly see he has along in view, not any particular being, but a number of Gods; and perhaps one has reason to doubt, whether he had in his thoughts any existence of an *infinite mind*. In this manner he concludes one of his excellent discourses: "As in serving, *says he*, and doing
 " kind offices to men, you come to know those
 " that are disposed to make suitable returns;
 " and as in consulting and advising with other
 " people, you come to know those that are wise
 " and prudent: so, if you will make trial of
 " the Gods, whether in serving them they are
 " disposed to instruct you in things not obvious
 " to mankind, you shall find that the *divinity*
 " is of so high a nature, that *they* both see all
 " things, and hear all things, and *are* every
 " where present, and have all things under *their*
 " care and government²." In another admirable discourse, he seems indeed to take notice

² Xenophon. Memorab. Lib. I. p. 728.

of a particular being, whom he beautifully describes as the being, *who frames and contains the universe, wherein are all things good and beautiful; who preserves it intire for our uses without waste and decay, while it unerringly ministers to his pleasure swifter than thought.* But I am sincerely concerned I have it here to observe, that one does not well apprehend, what is the particular being, that may be pointed at in this passage by *Xenophon*; whether an *infinite mind*, which I much doubt; or the *soul of the world*, which in the discourse last referred to, he seems to understand by *τὴν ἐν παντὶ φρόνησιν*; or, whether he means *all the Gods* in general, for in another place he describes the Gods without exception, by almost the very same lofty expressions^a. However it be, as he all along had in view a number of Gods, so he goes upon this notion at the conclusion of this discourse: “You ought, *says he*, without fail, so far as you are able, to honour the Gods, and confidently hope for the greatest blessings. Nor would a man be right in his wits, who should look for greater from other beings, than from *those* who are able to help us in the greatest instances^b.” Again;

HERE is a strong beautiful passage of *Aristotle's*, not now extant in his writings, but preserved by *Cicero*: “Were there men, *says Aristotle*, who always had lived under ground in handsome and grand apartments, adorned with

^a *Xenophon de Institut. Cyr.*
Lib. VIII. p. 237. C.

^b *Id. Memorab. Lib. IV.*
p. 802. D. p. 803. C.

“sculpture

“ sculpture and painting, and furnished with all
 “ those things wherewith those abound who are
 “ counted fortunate and rich; who yet had
 “ never been above ground, but had heard from
 “ fame, of the majesty and power of the Gods;
 “ and afterwards at a time, the earth being
 “ wide opened, had access to make their way
 “ from their hidden abodes to these places which
 “ we inhabit, and to come forth: when of a
 “ sudden these men should see the earth, the
 “ seas, and heaven; should observe the vastness
 “ of the clouds, and the violence of the winds;
 “ should behold the sun, and attend to his mag-
 “ nitude, his beauty and efficacy; that he
 “ creates the day by diffusing his light through
 “ the whole of heaven; and when the night
 “ had covered the earth in darkness, should
 “ then perceive the whole heavens distinguished
 “ and beautified with stars; the different *phases* of
 “ the moon growing and waning; the rising and
 “ setting of all these heavenly beings; and their
 “ invariable courses fixed to all eternity; when
 “ they should see these things, beyond doubt
 “ they would apprehend *there are Gods*, and
 “ that these so great things are the works of the
 “ Gods.” Now, this cause so strongly put,
 were it managed by a judicious hand among us,
 would soon open one’s mind, and bring one
 clearly to perceive the existence of the deity.
 But alas! these beautiful reflections in the hands
 of *Aristotle*, only serve to shew us that the hea-

venly bodies are Gods, and the *extremity of heaven*, or the *uppermost sphere*, is the *first and supreme deity*.

As for *Cicero*, I have before hinted, that he inclines to favour the religious sentiments of *Balbus*. So that in bringing together, in his *second book concerning the nature of the Gods*, such great numbers of the same sort of arguments, and in setting them forth with great beauty and elegance, *Cicero* only means to assure mankind, that the *sun*, *moon*, and *stars*, have *divinity* and *providence*, and rises no higher in his notion of the *supreme God*, than a *material* or *mechanical soul of the world*, which animates and pervades the whole, and upon the principles of the *Stoicks*, is as much concerned in the contrivance and construction of the universe, as our souls are in the contrivance and construction of their bodies. *Ab human reason!* — What are these divinities in whose service so many great wits have been employed ^d?

^d On vous citera d'excellens passages, où *Platon* a parlé de Dieu tres-sensément, mais cherchez les livres où il a parlé en physicien, & non pas en moraliste ou en politique. Vous trouverez un galimatias, & des impietez épouvantables dans sa theologie philosophique, si vous la pouvez anatomiser; & vous n'y trouverez l'unité réelle d'aucune chose. Souvenez vous, je vous prie, que *Justin Martyr*, s'étant engagé à prouver que les opinions des philosophes sur la

nature de Dieu étoient encore plus ridicules que celles des poëtes, ne cite pas moins en exemple les sentimens de *Platon*, que ceux de *Thales*, d'*Anaximandre*, &c. *Cont. des Pens. Divers.* chap. lxxviii. p. 351.

Le philosophe *Thales* assura, que tout étoit plein de Dieux. Les auteurs Chrétiens recueillent comme de la manne tous les passages de cette nature, afin de prouver, que nos grandes veritez ont été conuës aux Gentiles: mais ils devoient prendre

THUS

THUS we see *in fact*, that however antient philosophers took notice of those arguments, which *we now* successfully employ in explaining the existence of an infinite mind; yet they never did improve them to this purpose: and it should seem, that by reason of their absurd opinions about the heavenly bodies, they were kept from being capable of applying them in this manner. 'Tis needless here to debate, whether the antients had it in their power to attain to these notions of the heavenly bodies, wherein we now apprehend them, and whereby one should think, they might have come to have discovered the existence of the deity. I shall only observe that *in fact*, notwithstanding all their endeavours to search out the truth of things, they never did form any just conceptions of the nature of those beings; nor where there is no revelation, did ever any of human kind think more justly about them; which suffices to shew, that human powers are not quite so well fitted, without foreign instruction, to gain the knowledge of an infinite mind. And so natural does it seem for

garde que toutes ces expressions sont fondées sur le principe tres-impie, on que le monde a été formé de la substance de Dieu, ou que Jupiter, le plus grand des Dieux, n'est autre chose que le ciel materiel, & que l'ether qui envoie sur la terre les semences de tout ce qu'elle produit, les ames des plantes, celles de betes, celles des hommes. *Ib.* cap. cv. p. 498.

• Εἰ γὰρ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα ἐν αὐτοῖς

μαλὲ τῶν ἑλόντων θεῶν λαβόν-
τες Ἕλληνας, οὐκ ἴσα ἄλλα τὰ ἀλη-
θείας ἐφθέγγαντο, προσμαζιγῶσι
μὲν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτῶν ἐκ ἀποκα-
πευμένην· ὅπως δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐλέγχε-
σιν αἰδιότητες, ἐκ ἐπιτόμενοι τὰ τέλη.
ἤδη γὰρ οἶμαι πάντι τῷ δήλῳ γι-
γνέναι, ὡς καὶ χαλεπὸν ἑλόντων τὰ
ἀληθείας ἐνερπύνων τι, ἢ καὶ φθε-
γομένης, ὁμοίαν ὄντων τοῖς χαλεπῶς
βάσπεως βωδίζοντο βλαβερύτοις. Clem.
Alexand. Adm. ad Gent. p. 49.

mankind,

mankind, to imagine the heavenly bodies to be animated, that, as I have formerly hinted, *Jews* and *Christians* of no small character, were of this opinion. Besides *Tycho-Brabé* already mention-
ed, *Kepler*, another great astronomer, was not ashamed to profess it; and from the experiments I have made, I still suspect, that the bulk of mankind do, even at this day, every where apprehend them in this mistaken light. Nay, the celebrated Mr. *Bayle*, after having taken notice of *Kepler's* opinion, bids us remark carefully, that it would be difficult enough to disprove it; and he gives us this reason why he thinks so^f.

^f *Vossius* aiant remarqué combien il étoit absurde de mettre la terre au nombre des Dieux; la terre, dis-je, que tout le monde prenoit pour un corps, & que l'on fouloit aux pieds, & que l'on couvroit de toutes sortes de vilainies; ajoute que les plus sages virent bien cette absurdité, & qu'ils dirent que la terre étoit, ou un animal, ou une partie du grand animal, que l'on appelle le monde. *Kepler* n'a pas été éloigné de ce sentiment, continue-t-il, car non seulement il a dit que le mouvement diurne de la terre vient de la terre, mais aussi qu'elle s'apet-çoit de l'apparition des comètes, qu'elle en sue de fraieur, & que delà viennent de grandes plaies. "Audiamus eum loquentem libro de cometis anni post millesimum sexcentefimum septimi, atque idem duodevigesimi: Facultas mundi sublu-

"naris cometam PERSENTIS-
CIT, & OBSTUPESCIT, unaque facultates ceteræ omnium rerum sublunarium. Ac postea; facultas telluris, insolenti cometæ apparitione CON-
STERNATA, uno terrestris superficiæ loco multum exsudat vaporum, pro qualitate illius partis sui corporis: hinc diurnæ pluviæ, & eluviones." (Voss. de Orig. & Progr. Idololat. Lib. II. cap. lxii. p. 641.) *Gassendi* observe que selon *Kepler* toutes les étoiles sont animées, & comme les animaux se meuvent par le moyen de leurs muscles, la terre & les planètes ont aussi des muscles proportionnez à leur masse, & qui sont l'instrument par lequel elles se meuvent. Il donne au soleil une âme très noble & très-active, & il veut que les rayons du soleil mettent en action l'âme des planètes. Adnoto dumtaxat *Keplerum* ita

BUT had the ancients come to regard the heavenly bodies, as heaps of lifeless matter; would they from hence have perceived the existence of the deity? From the case of *Anaxagoras* and his followers, one may guess at the likelihood of such an event^s. *Nor does every*

fidera fecisse animata, ac, ut instrumenta motus in animalibus sunt fibræ digestæ per musculos, sic censuisse illum, esse & in terra, & in planetis cæteris, ingentibus fibras aliquas pro ratione molis ejusque, per quas anima vim suam motricem exerceat. Censuit vero etiam, præter speciales animas, & vireis, quæ insunt in cæteris, esse in ipso sole animam nobilissimam potentissimamque, quæ dum solem circa proprium axem (a centro mundi propterea non discedentem) circumagitur, immateriatas species (sic enim appellat) irradiando circumfundit, quibus planetæ velut correpti, ipsi soli circumducantur. (Gassend. Physic. Sect. 2. Lib. III. cap. vi. Oper. tom. 1. p. 635.) Voyez ce que je cite de *Mr. Leibnitz*; (It is this, *Tantum tamque constantium veritatum causas dare nondum potuit Keplerus; tum quod intelligentiis, aut sympathiarum radiationibus inexplicatis, haberet præpeditam mentem; tum quod nondum illius tempore, Geometria interior & scientia motuum eo quo nunc profecerant. Act. Erudit. Lips. 1689. p. 82, 83.*) & remarquez bien qu'il seroit assez difficile de refuter la supposition de *Kepler*; car nous ne sommes guere plus

en état de bien savoir si la terre est animée, que l'est un pou de savoir si nous sommes animez. Un pou se content de se nourrir de ce qu'il succe à la surface de nos corps: il ne fait point si nous pensons; il ne peut pas même decouvrir les ressorts internes qui nous meuvent. Pouvons-nous faire plus de decouvertes sur la question si la terre pense, & si elle a des sentimens, qui comme les nôtres déterminent certains ressorts interieurs à se mouvoir d'une certaine façon? *Bayl. Diction. in Kepler. Rem. D.*

^s Je ne veux pas être de ces esprits soupçonneux & audacieux à conjecturer, qui croiroient facilement que les anciens philosophes ont très-bien connu que leurs principes étoient l'éponge de toute religion, mais qu'ils ont fait semblance d'ignorer cette consequence, soit parce qu'elle sentoit le fagot, soit parce qu'ils souhaitoient d'être regardés au peuple comme des fauteurs de la piété.—Qu'on dise ce qu'on voudra: mais, pour moi, je ne veux rien conjecturer: toutes les sectes de l'ancienne philosophie sont coupables d'avoir raisonné inconsequemment. Il seroit aisé de les en convaincre

true

true step made in natural philosophy bring us immediately to the knowledge of the first cause, though it brings us nearer to it, and on that account is to be highly valued^h. In short, there was such difficulty, or such obscurity, or such absurdity, in every opinion held by the ancients, about the formation of the universe, and the nature of the Gods, that I believe *Cotta* expresses his sincere sentiments, when he declares, that *he could better tell what he should not think, than what he should think in relation to such articles*ⁱ. It is

par des preuves que l'on ne sauroit eluder. — Je ne vois qu'une bonne route philosophique pour leur conversion. C'est de poser d'abord pour principe, que rien d'imparfait ne peut exister de soi même, & de conclure de là que la matiere etant imparfaite n'existe point necessairement; qu'elle a donc été produite de rien; qu'il y a donc une puissance infinie, un esprit souverainement parfait qui l'a créé. On arrive par là sûrement & promptement à la Religion. Mais *n'allez pas vous imaginer que sans le secours d'en-haut, sans une grace de Dieu, sans les lumieres de l'écriture, on puisse facilement s'apercevoir de ce chemin-là*. Si vous afirmez que l'esprit de l'homme est assez fort pour decouvrir cette route, à moins qu'une impieté volontaire, qu'un dessein de faire la guerre à Dieu ne le jette dans l'égarement, vous serez obligé de le prouver. Vous me ferez beaucoup de plaisir, si vous vou-

lez bien me faire part des preuves que vous avez là-dessus; mais il faut qu'elles soient bonnes, & en ce cas-là vous devez attendre de moi un million de remerciemens: *Eris mihi magnus Apollo*. Cont. des Pens. divers. chap. cv. p. 500, 501. Vid. chap. cvi.

^h *Newt. Opt. B. 3. Qu. 28. p. 345.*

ⁱ *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. cap. 1.*

Let it here be remarked that the *improvements* of mankind with respect to their Knowledge of God, or their capacity to discover this essential article of religion, were no better in the days of *Cicero*, at no great distance from the publication of the *Gospel*, than they had been long before, in the days of *Moses*, concerning which more ancient times, a very judicious and learned writer makes these reflections.

“If we take, *says he*, what the ancients offered about the science of names, rejecting

finely

finely observed by Mr. *Locke* : " Nothing, *says he*,
 " seems hard to our understanding, that is once
 " known — for knowledge being only of
 " truths perceived to be so, we are favourable
 " enough to our own faculties to conclude they
 " of their own strength would have attained
 " those discoveries without any foreign assist-
 " ance. — He that travels the roads now ap-

" the idle and fanciful super-
 " structures which they built
 " upon it, we may form a fur-
 " ther reason for *Moses's* desiring
 " to be informed what the name
 " of God was. Men did not,
 " at this time, know the works
 " of creation well enough to
 " demonstrate from them the
 " attributes of God, nor could
 " they by speculation form
 " just and proper notions of his
 " nature. Some indeed, the
 " philosophers of these times,
 " thought themselves wise e-
 " nough to attempt these sub-
 " jects; but what was the suc-
 " cess? *professing themselves wise,*
 " *they became fools, and changed*
 " *the glory of the uncorruptible*
 " *God.* There was not a suf-
 " ficient foundation of a true
 " knowledge of the heavens,
 " elements, and of the frame
 " of the universe then laid, for
 " men to build upon, so as to
 " attain from the study of them
 " suitable and proper notions of
 " the deity : and hence it came
 " to pass, that the builders of
 " these ages, having had mate-
 " rials to work with, composed
 " weak and indefensible systems

" of theology. When they had
 " speculated upon *the fire*, or
 " *the wind, the swift air*, or
 " *the circle of the stars, the*
 " *violent water*, or *the lights of*
 " *heaven*, not forming true no-
 " tions of their natures ; they
 " were either *delighted with*
 " *their beauty*, or *astonished at*
 " *their power*, and framing very
 " high but false estimates of
 " them, they lost the know-
 " ledge of the workmaster, and
 " took the parts of his work-
 " manship to be God. And
 " some error of this sort, or
 " errors as pernicious as these,
 " *Moses* himself might have fal-
 " len into, if he had endea-
 " voured to have formed his
 " notions of God, either from
 " the *Aegyptian* learning, or
 " from any learning at this
 " time in the world. Faith,
 " or a belief of what God had
 " revealed, was the *only* principle
 " upon which he could hope
 " rightly to know God ; and
 " this was the principle, which
 " *Moses* here desired to go up-
 " on." *Shuckf. Connell. of the*
Sacr. and Proph. Hist. B. 9.
 p. 428.

plauds

“ plauds his own strength and legs, that have
 “ carried him so far in such a scantling of time,
 “ and ascribes all to his own vigour; little con-
 “ sidering how much he owes to their pains,
 “ who cleared the woods, drained the bogs,
 “ built the bridges, and made the ways pass-
 “ able: without which he might have toil’d
 “ much with little progress. A great many
 “ things which we have been bred up in the be-
 “ lief of from our cradles, (and are notions
 “ grown familiar, and as it were natural to us,
 “ under the gospel) we take for unquestionable
 “ obvious truths, and easily demonstrable; with-
 “ out considering how long we might have
 “ been in doubt or ignorance of them, had re-
 “ velation been silent^k.”

^k *Reasonabl. of christian.* p. 279. Permettez moi de vous dire, *says Mr. Bayle*, que ceux qui trouvent avec vous tant de clarté & tant de facilité dans nôtre question, jugent anciens siècles par le nôtre. Mais il faudroit considerer que ce qui nous est si facile & si manifeste, parce que Dieu nous a fait la grace de nous communiquer sa revelation, ne l’etoit pas à ceux qui n’avoient pour guide que la nature. L’esprit humain abandonné à lui-même s’égare facilement sur une mer aussi vaste & aussi profonde que celle-là :

*Mer, où l’esprit prenant sa raison pour son ource,
 Pourroit faire naufrage au milieu de sa course.*

Nous ressemblons à ceux qui s’étant servis de bon telescope, s’imagineroient que les autres hommes auroient facilement vu les satellites de Jupiter s’ils avoient voulu. Reconnaissons plutôt que la chose est en elle-même difficile, & n’allons point chercher des motifs d’erreur dans la sensualité des errans. Il faut bien que la chose soit difficile, puis que nous voions tous les jours que ceux qui combattent le plus vivement l’athéisme, lui donnent des armes sans y penser. *Mr. Cudworth* and *Mr. Grew* très-grans philosophes en font un exemple. — On n’a donc point d’autre but, que de vous représenter que sous prétexte que la doctrine orthodoxe sur ce point fondamental paroit

THAT I may now bring this part of my argument to a period ; when we thus find so much *confusion* and *contradiction* in the sentiments of antient philosophers concerning a deity ; some never at all suspecting there is any such being ; some doubting ; and others denying his existence ; and those who in words seem to maintain it, differing so widely from one another, and forming such absurd and inconsistent notions about, what they called, the divine nature and operations, that one cannot possibly apprehend they had, any of them, any the least knowledge of that infinite mind, whom we confess the *one only living and true God* : when we consider, that *Anaxagoras*, *Socrates* and his followers, who were the only philosophers that seem to have had any sort of apprehension of the being of the *ever blessed deity*, gave out so absurd and extravagant an account of the formation of the universe, that it clearly appears they never were able of themselves to have made the discovery, but must have been informed by others, as we know assuredly was the case with *Socrates* and his followers, about the existence of this infinite mind : when we reflect, that all the different sects of philosophers, if we except

aîsée, & évidente à nos peuples & à nos docteurs qui l'ont succée avec le lait, & qui en entendent parler à tout moment, & qui confirment la lumière naturelle par le secours de la lumière surnaturelle de l'écriture, il ne faut pas preten-

dre qu'à l'égard de tous les hommes un simple coup d'œil, ou une legere attention à ce grand objet, fust à leur en montrer l'évidence, pourvu qu'ils ne s'obstinent pas malicieusement à s'aveugler. *Contin. des Pens. Divers.* chap. xxi. p. 90, 92.

Anaxagoras

Anaxagoras and the inconsiderable few, that went along with him, unanimously professed that the heavenly bodies are animated beings, the Gods who have the government of the world, and on whom mankind depend: in a word, when we reflect what vast difficulty there ever was, and there still is, in the present state of humanity, to raise one's thoughts above all visible and sensible objects, and apprehend an infinite mind, absolutely perfect, independent of all matter, whose creatures the *sun* and *stars* are, and all other beings: I say, when we attend to all these particulars laid together, one cannot but judge it impossible for mankind, in the circumstances wherein I have represented them, left to themselves, rude and uncultivated, and without all foreign instruction, ever to come by their own sagacious enquiries to the knowledge of the deity; or to conceive there is any other God existing besides the heavenly bodies, or such sensible objects as may happen to fill their imagination¹. Nay the same we may con-

¹ *The famous Mr. Arnauld, who suffered so much from the Jesuits, being about to shew, that mankind have not sufficient means enabling them to discern the being and perfections of God, makes these reflections: Un moyen (says he, Second. Denonc. du Peché Philosoph. Art. xii. p. 90, 91, 95.) est appelé suffisant par rapport à la personne à qui on dit qu'il suffit. Ainsi un livre de geometrie peut estre un moyen suffisant pour appren-*

dre cette science à un homme de fort bon esprit, ou qui aura un genie extraordinaire pour cette sorte d'étude: mais ce n'en seroit un pour bien des gens: il faudroit encore un maître, qui leur expliquât ce livre, & qui leur en éclaircit les difficultés. Or ce sont tous les hommes généralement, dont la plupart sont sans étude, & avec peu d'élevation & de pénétration d'esprit, qui ont besoin de connoître Dieu & sa loy. C'est

clude with respect to philosophers^m.

UPON the whole therefore, I would beg leave

donc à l'égard de tous ces gens là, qui font sans comparaison la plus grande partie du genre humain, qu'il faut examiner, s'ils ont eu, ou s'ils non pas eu des moïens suffisans pour connoître Dieu & sa loy. — Commençons par ceux dont St. Paul dit, *qui Dieu avoit laissé toutes les nations marcher dans leurs voyes*, c'est à dire tous les peuples du monde, hors les Juifs, avant la predication d'évangile.

Considérons dans ces peuples les femmes qui en faisoient la moitié, les soldats, les artisans, & le reste de la populace, sans aucune application aux sciences, qui faisoient plus de trois quarts & demi de l'autre moitié : comment peut-on dire que ces personnes avoient des moïens suffisans de connoître qu'il y a un Dieu createur du Monde, qui defend le vice, & qui commande la vertu ? Vôte P. de Reux assure dans le passage cité dans la Nouvelle Heresie, que l'existence de Dieu n'est pas connue par elle-même quant à nous, *non est nota per se quoad nos* : & il rejette avec dedain en un autre endroit la demonstration la plus facile & la plus claire qu'on en puisse donner. Il pretend néanmoins qu'elle peut estre demonstrée d'une maniere proportionnée à l'intelligence du peuple même ; *demonstrari potest etiam populariter*. Qu'il nous dise donc, s'il croit que le petit peuple de Rome, & les

payfans des villages de l'Empire Romain, estoient capables de trouver d'eux-mêmes ces preuves populaires de l'existence de Dieu createur du monde, dont la loy devoit servir de regle aux actions des hommes : & qu'ainsi ce qu'ils avoient naturellement d'esprit leur estoit un moïen suffisant pour le connoître. Cela est si peu vraisemblable qu'on ne croit pas qu'il l'ose dire. — Ce seroit donc chicaner & agir de très mauvaise foy, que de ne pas reconnoître qu'il y a eu des mille millions de payens, qui non pas eu de moïens suffisans pour connoître Dieu & sa sainte loy, pendant ces temps d'ignorance, comme les appelle St. Paul, qui ont précédé l'avenement de Jesus Christ, lorsque Dieu n'estoit connu que dans la Judée ; *notus in Judæa Deus* : & que les saints du vieux Testament faisoient tant de vœux, afin que Dieu se fit connoître à tous les peuples : ce qui est si bien représenté par ces vers :

Dieu d'Israël dissipe enfin cette ombre.

Des larmes de tes Saints quand seras-tu touché,

*Quand sera le voile arraché,
Qui sur tout l'univers jette une nuit si sombre ?*

Dieu d'Israël dissipe enfin cette ombre.

Jusqu'à quand seras-tu caché ?

*Ὁς τοὺς ἁγίους σου
καὶ τοὺς ἁποστόλους σου ἐκείνη τὴν
τοῖς ἁποστόλοις, καὶ ἡ γὰρ αἰὶν*

to conclude, that however the belief of the being and perfections of God is the foundation of all religion, as the author of *Christianity as old as the creation* very well observes; yet mankind given up to themselves, and having no foreign instruction, must remain altogether ignorant of the existence, the nature, and perfections of this infinite mindⁿ. So that here we have found out

ὅτι θεῶν, ἢ πρὸς κόσμῳ δύναμις
τῶν ἀλλήλων ἀποφύναται. καὶ γὰρ ταύ-
την ἀνθρώποις ἔχουσιν, ἵνα μὴ τῇ ἐμ-
πλησίαν ἔπω, οἱ γὰρ τῇ ἰδίᾳ ψυχῇ
εὐρεῖν ἢ διαμαρτυροῦν, ζητοῦσι τὸ
θεῶν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα
ἀκείνοτες, τῇ δὲ κόσμῳ φύσιν πε-
ριεργάζονται. Herm. Irris. Gent.
Philosoph. cap. v.

ⁿ The learned Mr. *Du Pin* having explain'd the first religions of the world, and how mankind went on introducing one sort of Gods after another, sums up the whole in this manner, and makes some reflections which I suppose will meet with some people's approbation.

Voilà tout ce qui se peut recueillir des monumens dignes de foi touchant ce qu'il y a de plus vrai-semblable sur les premières religions du monde. Il paroît par là que la véritable religion enseignée par Noé & par Sem fut bien-tôt corrompue dans toutes les nations du monde, & que cette maxime, *Que Dieu abandonna toutes les nations suivre leurs voies, dimisit Deus gentes ingredi vias suas*, n'est pas seulement une vérité établie sur l'autorité de l'écriture sainte,

mais aussi sur le temoignage des historiens profanes, & qu'en cela, comme dans les autres faits considérables, l'histoire sainte & l'histoire profane sont d'accord, & se soutiennent mutuellement. L'aveuglement des hommes, qui ont si-tôt abandonné le vrai Dieu, pour adorer premièrement des êtres naturels, comme le soleil, la lune, & les autres astres, ensuite des esprits ou des Demons, après cela des héros, ou les inventeurs des arts & des sciences, & qui ont poussé le culte jusqu'à honorer non seulement les vertus & les biens, mais aussi les vices & les maux, & à multiplier les divinités à l'infini; cet aveuglement, dis-je, est un effet de la corruption de l'homme, qui tire son origine du péché originel, en sorte que l'histoire profane confirme d'une manière invincible l'histoire sacrée. *L'Hist. Prof. chap. viii. Seconde Part. Tom. 1. p. 326.*

And how little mankind are to be trusted to themselves, or to the use of their own rational faculties, for finding out the being and perfections of God, we may clearly learn from the case of some modern philosophers,
another

another *fundamental* article, the very *life* and *soul* of natural religion, which above all things it concerns all men to know, that is so far from

who, in explaining the nature and structure of the world, reject the consideration of all final causes, and propose to account for the formation of things, without any regard to the efficiency of God; openly professing that we ought only to enquire, *After what manner the world might have been made*, and not *who made it*; whereby they are led to contrive an *hypothesis* of their own, which representing God to have had no farther concern in the formation of the universe, than at the beginning to have impressed a certain degree of motion upon *three imaginary elements*, seems to attribute no more to the efficiency of the first cause, than had been done by *Anaxagoras*, vid. *Cartes princip. Part. I. § 28.* and *Part. III. § 46, &c.* This conduct, with great justice, is highly condemn'd by *Sir Isaac Newton. Opt. B. 3. p. 344, 378.* But,

Without mentioning others that might be named, who had far greater advantages than the heathen world; the late *Mr. Toland*, a keen and noted advocate in the cause of *Deism*, while he rejects *revelation*, and betakes himself to the bare use of his *rational* faculties, is able to conceive no better sentiments concerning God and the human soul, than those that are taught by the *Stoicks*. *Vis denique*, says he, *& energia totius*,

creatrix omnium & moderatrix, ac ad optimum finem semper tendens, Deus est; quem mentem dicas, si placet, & animum universi: unde sodales Socratici, proprio ut dixi vocabulo, appellantur Pantheistæ; cum vis hæcce, secundum eos, non nisi sola ratione ab ipsomet universo separatur. Pantheist. Sect. IV. p. 8. *Ignis æthereus omnia circundans, ideoque supremus; omnia permeans, ideoque & intimus, cujus analogica quædam & imperfecta similitudo est culinaris ignis; æther, inquam, (cerebri miranda fabrica ad id idonea, & exterioribus objectis per sensuum nervos illic agentibus, variasque phantasias excitantibus) omne perceptionis, imaginationis, reminiscentiæ, amplificandarum idearum & imminuendarum machinamentum rite perficit.* Ibid. Sect. VI. p. 12. Nor are these among the random thoughts of *Mr. Toland*. With the very same thoughts he concludes his own *epitaph*, which he made some few days before he died:

*Spiritus cum æthereo Patre,
A quo prodiit olim, conjungitur:
Corpus item Naturæ cedens,
In materno gremio reponitur.
Ipse vero æternum est resurrecturus,
At idem futurus TOLANDUS
nunquam.*

Life of Mr. Toland prefix'd to his *Posth. Works*, p. 89: being

being knowable by ALL, that it really seems knowable by NONE °.

I suppose the reader will have observed, that in explaining the truth of this argument, I have entered into no particular consideration of the sentiments of the more *eastern* nations, and have

° To show how very early the opinion I maintain, was, after the days of the *apostles*, particularly taken notice of in the *Christian* church; among many instances that might be given, let me here single out *Justin Martyr* and *Athenagoras*.

The first of these excellent persons, having in his search after truth, gone through all the different sects of *philosophers* that were then of any note in the world, before he embrac'd the *christian* religion, for which he suffer'd *martyrdom*, may well be allow'd to understand, how far mankind left to themselves had gone or were able to go, in the exercise of their rational powers, towards discovering the being of God, the creation of of man, the *immortality* of the soul, and a *future state* of rewards and punishments: and with respect to all these several articles, this good and learned man expressly declares, and in his excellent little treatise, *An Exhortation to the Gentiles*, no less than four or five different times he repeats it; namely, that neither by nature, nor by human wit, is it possible for mankind to discover things so great and divine; but we must know them from the gift of

revelation derived from above to holy men. Just. Mart. ad Græc. Cohort. § 8. & alib.

As for *Athenagoras*; 'tis reported of him, that having conceiv'd a design to write against the *Christian* institution, and for that purpose carefully reading over the sacred books, he came to be so far from executing what he intended, that he found reason to embrace the religion which he was to have confuted. Now this excellent *philosopher*, in his notable apology in behalf of the professors of *christianity*, having observ'd that he and others, who had the benefit of revelation, were able to demonstrate the reasonableness of their believing, *there is one God*; he expressly declares that *heathen poets and philosophers* were not able of themselves, without revelation, to find out and discern that being: Τοῦτον δὲ δύνησιν ὅσον περινοῦσαι ἐκ ἐνενήλου i.e. But they were not found of so much capacity, as to apprehend or discover the true God: Ὁ δὲ ἀληθὺς Θεὸς ἀξιώσαντες μαθεῖν, ἀλλὰ παρ' αὐτῶ ἕκαστος, διὸ καὶ ἄλλοις ἄλλως ἰδοῦμαί τινον αὐτῶν καὶ εἰς Θεῶ, καὶ εἰς ὕλην, καὶ πρὸς εἶδον, καὶ πρὸς κόσμον. *Athenag. Legat. pro Christian. cap. xi. p. 31.*

wholly

wholly neglected all those other parts of the world that are of later discovery. This however is no evidence but that one might have likewise produced *facts* from the modern histories of all those several countries, that equally conclude the truth of every article in this argument. But I rather chose to instance only in facts given out by *heathens* themselves, especially their learned men and philosophers: because taking the account of things immediately from those persons, who were left to conceive their religious sentiments, as their natural powers would enable them; there seems to be no danger of our being imposed upon by a false representation: whereas our late historians being prepossessed with a set of religious principles of their own, they are in hazard of explaining the religious *phenomena* of the *heathen* world according to their own prepossessions, or in a consistency with their own particular scheme of things, which one may easily shew is the plain case in several instances; so that one cannot well rest satisfied that all those religious principles they alledge, were really held in those parts of the world that have lately come to our knowledge. And since few or none of our modern travellers seem in every article to have reported the pure genuine opinions of those *heathen* countries they have visited, without mixing their own particular notions of things; it were to be wished that some persons of discretion and judgment, that understands the language of such people, would take the trouble to inform himself, like a man absolutely

lutely ignorant of all religion, about their true and real sentiments, and faithfully relate things as he is instructed, without introducing any *foreign apprehensions*.

IN the mean while, from the scattered hints I have above given, and from other second-hand accounts one has access to see, one should think it manifest, that the religious powers of the more *eastern* nations are not more extensive, than those of other people. I know Dr. *Hyde* values himself greatly upon having discovered, as he alleges, that the antient *Medes* and *Persians* had the knowledge of the true God, and paid all their religious worship to him alone; from whence he takes occasion to be highly offended at all those writers, who report, that those people worshipped the *fire*, or any of the luminaries of heaven. I confess I am far from being satisfied that this learned man has put his opinion beyond all question. If I am not very much mistaken, from his own account of things the contrary opinion seems, at least, extremely suspicious, if not altogether certain. But whatever be in that, as Dr. *Hyde* wholly attributes to *tradition* all the knowledge, which is said to have prevailed among the *Medes* and *Persians* concerning the deity, the truth of my argument is so far from being invaded by his relation of things, that it comes thereby to be strongly supported. And

Veterum Persarum eorum-que posterorum religionem ab initio repetendo, & ab illius gentis primordiis arcessendo & perscrutando, compertum habemus, nullum esse dubium quin aborigine gentis Medicæ & Persicæ conditores fuerint ortho-

if one will attend to the sentiments of the book *Sad-dir*, an abstract of *Zoroaster's* doctrine, one shall find no reason to suspect (but a great deal to the contrary) that those people were of themselves capable to have discovered the being and perfections of the true God^s. Nor does this learned man any where seem to ascribe any such power to human nature. And

× As for the people of *America*; from the accounts we have 'tis pretty manifest, that when the *Spaniards* first appear'd in that new world, the inhabitants took their *ships* to be floating monsters; their *great guns* to be angry deities; *watches* to be living animals; *paper* and *ink* to be spirits, which convey'd mens thoughts from one to another. And as for their religious principles, I shall here instance in the inhabitants of those parts, which the *Spaniards* after their conquests, called *The new kingdom of Granada*.

THESE people are said to have been rational enough in their moral sentiments, whilst they severely punish'd crimes, particularly murder and theft. And from their temples in towns,

doxi; prout Noachides *Shem*, a quo oriundi sunt, suam familiam & populares docuit, eosque cum primæva simplicitate in veri Dei cultu & cognitione primo instituit, &c. *Hyd. Hist. Relig. Veter. Persar.* cap. i. p. 2, &c.

¶ Præceptum est ut bene custodias ignem *Martis*. — Cum a virtute ignis *Martis* suppedite-
tur vita tam proceribus quam vulgo [*i.e.* omnibus] inter homines quidem omnes possumus

esse ut pastor & grex a splendore & illuminatione angelorum: At si non fuisset ignis *Martis*, non esset aliquis inter creaturas vivens, nec esset in hac vita permanentia. Quantum itaque potes pro signo [seu monimene] adhibe ignem *Adurân*, & juxta eum petitiones & desideria tua habeto; quia inde erit tibi splendor & illuminatio infinita. *Sadd.* cap. xciii. *apud Hyd.* ubi supra, p. 483.

and

and others abroad in the country, and abundance of little chapels or hermitages on the roads, and in woods, in all which there was much gold and emeralds; they seem to have been very devout and religious. They were however no better informed about the deity, than other parts of that new found world. For among them the *Sun* and *Moon* were esteem'd to be the *universal Creators*, and were regarded as the great objects of religious worship; with whom they conceiv'd their other deities made intercession in their favour. At the same time their opinion about the *Sun* and *Moon* is very extravagant: they apprehend that they live together like *man* and *wife*; and thereby propagate other animals. Thus "when the *Spaniards* first
 " enter'd the kingdom, the natives were in a
 " great consternation, looking upon them as
 " the *children* of the *Sun* and *Moon* whom they
 " ador'd, saying they engender'd like man and
 " woman, and had sent those their children
 " from heaven to punish them for their sins:
 " and therefore they call'd the *Spaniards*, *Uchies*,
 " a name compounded of *Ufa* signifying the
 " *Sun* and *Chia* the *Moon*." Thus likewise, the *Ingas* or emperors of *Peru* pretended to derive their pedigree from none but the *Sun*, and were therefore address'd, *Very mighty lord descended from the sun*^r. And this conceit of looking upon the *sun* and *moon* in a *conjugal relation*,

^r *Anton. de Herrero. Hist. of Amer.* B. 3. chap. iv. p. 16. ^r *Id. ibid.* B. 9. chap. i. p. 286. Vol. IV. Vol. V.

seems to have been pretty common: "The people of *Cumana* adored the *sun* and *moon*, whom they took for *man* and *wife*, reckoning them great Gods: they were afraid of thunder and lightening, saying the *sun* was angry; and fasted for eclipses, especially the women; the wives tore their hair, and scratched themselves; and the maidens drew blood from their arms with fish-bones; thinking that the moon was hurt by the sun upon some falling out."

FROM this fanciful opinion of the *Americans*, one cannot but call to mind, that *Bassianus* or *Heliogabulus* (one of the priests of the sun among the *Phœnicians*, who with the nations about them, were greatly devoted to this deity) when he came to be *Roman* emperor, instituted a marriage betwixt the *sun* and the *moon*, and caused it to be celebrated at *Rome* and all over *Italy* both in publick and private, with great solemnity. So that in the most distant parts of the world, human nature seems to exert itself in what relates to religion much after the same manner.

BEFORE I conclude this section, I shall here take notice of a difficulty, which, I doubt not, before now has occur'd to the reader. It is universally allowed, and indeed it is necessary to conceive, that mankind must have some particular *standard*, whereby to judge of the truth of revelation; otherwise they should lye obnoxious

* *Anton. de Herrer. History of Amer.* p. 309. Vol. III.

* *Herodian. Lib. V. cap. v. and xv.*

to every imposture; and since, for my part, it is agreed, that the religion of nature is the only sure standard, whereby mankind can safely judge of the worth and importance of religious doctrines that may pretend to revelation. Now, as I presume, we have found, that natural religion it self lyes beyond human discovery, and that mankind can come to the knowledge of it only by revelation; in this event is it not plain, that mankind have no standard whereby to judge of the truth of any revelation, and therefore must lye exposed to the delusions of every impostor; or else live and die without the sense or knowledge of any religion whatsoever? This is the difficulty, and, as I apprehend, it is very easily satisfied.

As we have now made it out, that mankind without revelation, or foreign instruction, are incapable of discovering the being and perfections of God, the great foundation of all religion whatsoever; the question is, by what standard shall mankind judge of the truth of what may come to be reveal'd or propos'd to them in relation to this article? It would be absurd to say, they must judge of it by their natural notions of the deity, or by the authority of God founded in his truth or veracity; for till now they are reputed wholly ignorant of any such being or any such perfections: the plain answer is, they must judge of it by the nature of things, or from the common maxims or principles of common sense. What I mean is briefly this; philosophers find their scholars

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possessed

possessed of as much common sense, as renders them capable of being led (as they were once themselves, and as all their fathers were before them, who had any knowledge of this truth) by rational instructions to discern there is a God: and as it can't but be agreed upon, that the first men were no less capable of being rationally instructed in the same truth, suppose, by an angel; so, whoever the being is that first informed mankind about this article, I dare venture to say, he did not lay the credit, or put the truth of his information, upon the foot of mere authority; but led on the human mind by rational proofs and arguments, and brought it with a just understanding of the nature of things, to perceive and confess the being and perfections of the deity *.

* I would here propose a question to the consideration of the reader: Suppose a man in all instances of his moral character, exactly good and virtuous, having no appetite, no passion productive of evil, animated with every kind affection, and steddily pursuing a generous plot (which to our thorough conviction he prefers before all earthly enjoyments) of engaging mankind by his example, by his instructions and rules of life, in mutual love and friendship, and thereby every where diffusing universal safety and happiness; if a man of this lovely character, telling us he is come from another world, and has perfect knowledge of all the se-

veral beings that are there, of their government, their state and circumstances, should with great constancy distinctly inform us, there is only one God over all, an infinite mind, the great creator of the sun, the moon, and of all things in heaven and earth, the supreme disposer and governor of the universe, in both worlds the only object of religious worship; that human souls are immortal, and do come, after this life, to enjoy rewards or suffer punishments, each according to its moral qualities, in that other world: my question is; Would those people act rationally, or as it becomes honest men, who without physical or natural proofs,

AND

AND thus the first men being instructed upon rational proofs in the knowledge of the great Creator of the universe, those proofs they would propagate to their posterity: so that the same proofs (and others perhaps discover'd by human industry) still going on, the knowledge of the being and perfections of God is preserved; and that, which at first came from supernatural re-

should give credit to this information from such a hand? I violently suspect, that the bulk of mankind are not capable of understanding these truths upon any other sort of evidence. And this I cannot but observe, ought powerfully to prevail with all publick teachers of religion to be particularly careful of their moral character, and to distinguish themselves in the exercise of all meekness, probity, and goodness.

" 'Tis at least, *says Mr. Locke*,
 " a surer and shorter way, to
 " the apprehensions of the vul-
 " gar, and mass of mankind;
 " that one manifestly sent from
 " God, and coming with visible
 " authority from him, should
 " as a king and law-maker tell
 " them their duties; and re-
 " quire their obedience; than
 " leave it to the long, and some-
 " times intricate deductions of
 " reason, to be made out to
 " them. Such strains of reason-
 " ings the greatest part of man-
 " kind have neither leisure to
 " weigh, nor, for want of edu-
 " cation and use, skill to judge
 " of. ——— Hearing plain
 " commands is the sure and on-

ly course to bring the bulk
 " of mankind to obedience and
 " practice. The greatest part
 " cannot know, and therefore
 " they must believe. And I
 " ask, whether one coming from
 " heaven in the power of God,
 " in full and clear evidence and
 " demonstration of miracles,
 " giving plain and direct rules
 " of morality and obedience,
 " be not likelier to enlighten
 " the bulk of mankind, and
 " set them right in their duties,
 " and bring them to do them,
 " than by reasoning with them
 " from general notions and
 " principles of human reason?
 " And were all the duties of
 " human life clearly demon-
 " strated; yet I conclude, when
 " well considered, *that* method
 " of teaching men their duties
 " would be thought proper on-
 " ly for a few, who had much
 " leisure, improved understand-
 " ings, and were used to ab-
 " stract reasonings. But the
 " instructions of the people were
 " best still to be left to the pre-
 " cepts and principles of the
 " gospel." *Reasonabl. of Christ.*
 p. 268. 282.

velation, is now no more than natural instruction, and seems to lye naturally level to human understanding. After the same manner one may conceive of the other articles of natural religion, that are capable of being explain'd by natural proofs. And thus, I hope, I have fully satisfied this difficulty.

Nulla est humana sapientia, si perse ad notionem veri, scientiamque nitatur; quoniam mens hominis cum fragili corpore illigata, & in tenebroso domicilio inclusa, neque liberius evagari, neque clarius perspicere veritatem potest; cujus notio divinae

conditionis est. Deo enim soli opera sua nota sunt. Homo autem non cogitando, aut disputando, assequi eam potest; sed discendo, & audiendo ab eo, qui scire solus potest, & docere. *Lact. institut. Lib. VII. cap. ii.*

SECT.

S E C T. VIII.

Mankind not being able of themselves to discover the being and perfections of God, and the immortality of the soul, or a future state of rewards and punishments; the unavoidable consequence is, in order to introduce natural religion among mankind, supernatural revelation is indispensably necessary. And the world being possessed of the knowledge of these two fundamental articles of natural religion, this is an undeniable proof, from the effect to the cause, that God has actually favoured mankind with the blessing of revelation: nor can that revelation any where be found but in the Christian institution.

HITHERTO I have laid before the reader some very plausible conjectures, that seem to be founded in the nature of things, concerning the extent of human knowledge with respect to the *immortality of the soul*, and the *being and perfections of God*; when men are supposed to be left to themselves, and to have no foreign instruction to assist them in the acquisition of religious truths. I have, I think, made good those conjectures from *matters of fact*, or from the certain and undoubted opi-

nions and sentiments of antient philosophers, as they were able to conceive and form them, while they did the best they could in examining into the nature, the formation, and construction of the universe, and of particular beings in it.

IN this manner I have explained, that mankind given up to themselves, and left wholly to their own industry to investigate the principles of religion from the nature and relations of things, *are not able, in these circumstances, to discern the immortality of the soul, nor the being, the perfections, and providence of God.*

AND thus mankind being found quite ignorant of these articles, they can have no notion of a future state of rewards and punishments; they can never understand their real interests and true happiness, as they are rational and social beings, whose main felicity consists in the intercourse and correspondence, which a man's soul shall have in another world, with the supreme head of the intelligent creation, and with innumerable unbodied minds to eternity: nor can they apprehend the laws of nature, particularly as they regard the inward motions and affections of the soul, and are the great means whereby our souls are fitted for the enjoyment of a rational happiness, in the society of other spirits in a separate state of existence^z: I say, mankind not

^z Mr. Bayle at great length makes it extremely manifest, that the religion of the *heathen* had no tendency to purify the heart of man, or to form it to goodness and virtue; but quite the contrary. *Cont. des Pens. divers.* chap. xlix. — liv. And says, *Jul. Firmicus*, (De Error. Prophan. Relig. cap. xiii.) being

being able of themselves to discover the immortality of the soul, and the being and perfections of God, they must likewise remain ignorant of those other articles. For as without the help of tradition or revelation, mankind's knowledge in morals or natural religion seems wholly to depend on their knowledge in natural philosophy, (which alone can teach us, when left to ourselves, the being and attributes of God, and consequently the fate of our souls;) so the gross ignorance that prevailed among the heathen with respect to the latter, unavoidably brought along with it as great ignorance in relation to the former^a.

INDEED it may be thought that mankind must have known and observed some branches

Semina pene omnium scelerum a diis suis peccantium turba collegit. Wherein he is justify'd by

Dionysius Halicarnas. who, Lib.

II. p. 91. gives out his opinion

thus: Ο ὅτι πολλοί, says he, καὶ

αἰφύλοστοι φησὶ ὅτι ἐπὶ ταῖς χερ-

σιν λαμβάνειν φίλῃ τὸς περὶ

αὐτῶν (θεῶν) λόγους, καὶ παρὰ τὴν

δοῦν δόξαν, ἢ καταφρονεῖν αὐ-

θῶν, ὡς ἐν πολλῇ κακοδαμονίᾳ

κυλινδρῶνται, ἢ τῶν αἰχρίων τε καὶ

τοῦ θυγατρῶν ἐνδὸς ἀπέχουσαι,

θεοὺς αὐτὰ προσκείμενα ὄντων.

^a "If natural philosophy in

"all its parts, by pursuing this

"method of *analysis*, shall at

"length be perfected, the bounds

"of moral philosophy will al-

"so be enlarged. For so far

"as we can know by natu-

"ral philosophy what is the

"first cause, what power he

"has over us, and what bene-

"fits we receive from him, so

"far our duty towards him, as

"well as that towards one ano-

"ther will appear to us by the

"light of nature. And no

"doubt if the worship of false

"Gods had not blinded the

"heathen, their moral philoso-

"phy would have gone farther

"than to the four cardinal vir-

"tues; and instead of teaching

"the transmigration of souls,

"and to worship the sun and

"moon and dead heroes, they

"would have taught us to wor-

"ship our true author and bene-

"factor, as their ancestors did

"under the government of Noah

"and his sons, before they cor-

"rupted themselves." *Newt.*

Opt. B. III. p. 381.

at least, of the law of nature, otherwise they should never, in any instance, have kept associated together. But, as Mr. *Locke* very well remarks, "those just measures of right and wrong, which necessity had any where introduced, the civil laws prescribed, or philosophy recommended, stood not on their true foundations. They were looked on as bonds of society, and conveniences of common life, and laudable practices. But where was it that their obligation was thoroughly known and allowed, and they received as precepts of a law, of the highest law, the law of nature? That could not be, without a clear knowledge, and acknowledgement of a law-maker, and the great rewards and punishments for those that would or would not obey him."

^b *Reasonableness of Christian.*
p. 278. Tous les anciens philosophes generalement n'ont cherché que dans leur esprit & leur raison la regle de leurs devoirs. Comment donc voudroit on s'imaginer que les femmes, les soldats, les artisans, les payfans, & tout le reste de la populace payenne, ayent eu des moyens suffisans pour croire qu'on offense Dieu, quand on fait une méchante action, parce que la loy de Dieu la défend, ce qui a esté entièrement ignoré de tous les philosophes payens, au moins pendant plusieurs siècles? On trouve sur cela un endroit bien remarquable dans les offices de *Ciceron*. Il y propose les raisons

de ceux qui pretendoient que *Regulus* pouvoit ne pas garder son serment; dont l'une estoit celle-ci: sur quoi cette obligation seroit elle fondée? Est-ce que nous craignons que *Jupiter* ne soit en colere contre nous, & ne nous punisse? Mais tous les philosophes conviennent, tant ceux qui nient la providence que ceux qui la croient, que Dieu ne se met en colere contre personne, & ne fait de mal à la personne: *NUNQUAM Deum nec irasci nec nocere*. A quoi il repond que cela est vrai; & que ce n'est point aussi sur cela qu'est fondée l'obligation de garder son serment, mais sur la bonne foy & sur la justice. *Quod affirmat quasi*

THUS

Thus far we are come. And having laid down these principles, I would now ask the candid and ingenious reader, *what are we bound in reason to conclude from them?* Shall we boldly assure the world, that mankind left to themselves are fully able, without any foreign assistance, to search out and apprehend all the articles of natural religion, that can be judged necessary to the perfection and happiness of human nature? Or, shall we yield to plain common sense, and fairly conclude, that mankind, left to *apprehend, judge, and infer*, as their own faculties will enable them, are quite incapable of discovering those very truths and articles, that are absolutely necessary to the very being of religion among intelligent creatures? And from this again, are we not bound to conclude, (how much soever it may seem a *paradox*) that in order to introduce even natural religion among human kind, foreign instruction, or supernatural revelation is, I had almost said, absolutely and indispensably necessary? For my own particular, I do not see how I can answer to common sense and reason, without resting assured of the truth of these consequences. But to proceed a little further:

Deo teste promiseris, id tenendum est. Jam enim non ad iram Deorum, QUÆ NULLA EST, sed ad justitiam & ad fidem pertinet. Ils ne croioient donc point que le violement du serment fût un péché, parce que Dieu en estoit offensé, mais seulement parce que c'estoit manquer à la bonne foi & à la justice,

de ne pas faire ce qu'on avoit promis de faire en prenant Dieu à témoin de cette promesse. Ce seroit donc chicaner, &c. (*What follows is transcrib'd in a quotation above.*) Arnauld. 2. *De non du Péché Philosoph* Art. 12. p. 94.

² Quare, si neque illi fuere sapientes, qui sunt appellati, neque posteriores, qui non dubi-

to

Do we not likewise see how absurd it is, and unworthy a philosopher to alledge, that God, in a consistency with the perfections of his nature, can never interpose in an extraordinary manner, and reveal to mankind a particular system of religious articles, that lye beyond the reach of human discovery; and that if any religion pretending to come from God, shall be found to contain such articles, it must therefore be counted an *imposture*? I confess the author, whose book I have in view, does not mean to say, that the *Christian* religion cannot be supposed to have come from God, because it contains these essential articles of natural religion, which in my apprehension, are not discoverable by mankind: I presume his opinion is, that the *Christian* institution can be no divine revelation, because, for instance, it teacheth there are *three in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, who are three distinct persons possessed of

taverunt insipientiam confiteri, quid superest, nisi ut alibi sit quaerenda sapientia, quando non est, ubi querebatur, inventa? Quid autem putemus fuisse causae, cur tot ingeniis, totque temporibus summo studio & labore quaesita, non reperiretur, nisi quod eam philosophi *extra fines suos* quaesierunt? Qui quoniam peragratis & exploratis omnibus, nusquam sapientiam comprehenderunt, & alicubi esse illam necesse est; apparet, illic potissimum esse quaerendam ubi stultitiae titulus apparet, cujus velamento Deus, ne arcanum

summi sui divini operis in propatulo esset, thesaurum sapientiae ac veritatis abscondit. Unde equidem soleo mirari, quod cum *Pythagoras*, & postea *Plato* amore indagandae veritatis accensi, ad *Aegyptios*, & *Magos*, & *Persas* usque penetrassent, ut earum gentium ritus & sacra cognoscerent, (suspiciabantur enim sapientiam in religione versari) ad *Judeos* tamen non accesserint; penes quos tunc solos erat, & quo facilius ire potuissent. *Lactant. Inst. Lib. IV. cap. 2.*

divine

divine perfections; which, all are agreed, is a doctrine that no man is able to discover by his own researches. But

If such a circumstance in any particular doctrine, viz. *Its lying beyond the reach of human discovery*, is a good proof that the religion, where it is taught, if it pretends to come from God, is an *imposture*; it must at the same time be allowed, *there never was, there never can be*, any true religion in the world: and natural religion, whose essential articles are not discoverable by human creatures left to themselves, is so far from having a divine original, that it is a *mere impostition* upon deluded mankind. Indeed if a religion contains articles, that are contradictory to the nature of things, to common sense, or the principles of reason, (which has never yet been made out against the *Christian* institution) this is sufficient to demonstrate, that such a religion has no pretensions to a divine original: But, I say, to alledge, that a religion pretending to have come from God is therefore a *mere imposture*, because it comprehends articles not discoverable by mankind, is what was never before maintained, so far as I know, by any philosopher whatsoever; it by no means stands to reason, and in my judgment, (far beside the intention, I dare say, of the author) it is wholly destructive of all true religion whatsoever.

Thus it should seem, that mankind by the light of nature, or in the exercise of their natural powers and faculties, having no foreign instruction, are not able of themselves to acquire the knowledge

knowledge of natural religion^d. And as mankind thus wholly in their own hands, and left entirely to their own notions of things, can have nothing among them, that can deserve the name of religion; and stand in great, in *absolute* need, as I apprehend, of supernatural revelation; so when we meet with men in antient times, who believed the immortality of the soul, and the being of God, *this*, to me at least, is a most convincing proof from the effect to the cause, a full demonstration, that *God has of old had communication with human kind, in revealing to them a system of religion in an extraordinary manner.*

I DO not here appeal to the books of *Moses* as a divine revelation; I only now regard them as a history that deserves, at least, as much credit, as any other book of antiquity. And as it

^d Eadem miseros ubique cecitas premit; sicut enim qui sit verus Deus, ita qui sit verus cultus, ignorant. *Lactan. Inst. Lib. VI. cap. 1. sub. fin.*

“ I shall not insist, says a
“ *polite and ingenious author*,
“ on this book's being penn'd
“ by *inspiration*; tho' it will
“ be granted by people of any
“ judgment, that there is some-
“ thing wonderful and extraor-
“ dinary in the *composition* and
“ *style* of it, beyond those of
“ other writings; and that the
“ *author* were at least men of a
“ most sublime, noble and ex-
“ tensive *genius* and *capacity*:
“ which, to go no further, is

“ sufficient to obtain for it a
“ respectful and civil treatment,
“ from such as would be thought
“ gentlemen and scholars; since
“ to despise or use it rudely,
“ shews at least as *bad a taste*,
“ and no less ignorance, as to
“ make a jest of *Homer, Plato,*
“ *Xenophon, Virgil, Cicero, &c.*
“ On considering its use and
“ value by the same rules as we
“ judge of other writings, we
“ shall find, it not only abounds
“ with the *true sublime*, as the
“ great critick *Longinus* owns;
“ but being the *oldest book* in the
“ world, must give a more rea-
“ sonable account of the *begin-*
“ *ning of things*, than any book

stands

stands to reason, that God should reveal himself to his rational creatures, and give them a law for the perfection and happiness of their nature in all circumstances; so we know from *Moses*, that God did actually instruct the first men, and gave them to understand that the *heavens* as well as the *earth*, *themselves* and *all other things*, are the works of his hands: upon which they could not possibly fail to conceive deep impressions, exalted notions of the power, wisdom, and goodness of the deity, as their great creator, their sovereign lord and governor. Perhaps indeed, one cannot well determine, whether *Moses* derived his history of the creation from *tradition*, or from immediate *revelation*: but upon the best principles of reason, one may be pretty sure, that this article of his history is undoubtedly true, or that God did certainly inform the first men about his creating and forming the universe, and thereby clearly pointed out to them his being and perfections; without the knowledge of which natural religion can have no foundation: all which they were to hand down and propagate to their posterity.

AND as the history of the creation of the world does in the strongest manner proclaim the being and perfections of God; and its being kept

"wrote since. Besides, it is
 "pretty plain, that every body
 "else that has given any relation
 "of the world's creation, its
 "first inhabitants, the deluge,
 "&c. has either borrowed from
 "*Moses*, as did *Plato* and *Ovid*;

"or else forms a much more
 "unphilosophical story, and fuller
 "of fables, difficulties, and
 "absurdities, than the most in-
 "veterate caviller, can alledge
 "to be in *this*," &c. *Univ. Spectat.*

up, and universally known, is of the highest consequence to the well-being and happiness of mankind; so it gives me pleasure to observe, that *Moses* plainly tells us, that from the beginning of the world, as I understand it, the *seventh* day was set apart by a divine appointment in *memory of the creation*, or for mankind thereon solemnly to contemplate the heavens and the earth, as the works or productions of God, that by thus frequently *recognizing* him as the great and sovereign lord of all, they might maintain upon their minds a deep and lasting sense of his being and perfections. In this manner, I apprehend the knowledge of God arising from the history of the creation was secured, and the *longevity* of the first men did greatly contribute to preserve it. So long lived were those ancient *patriarchs*, that *three* of them, *Adam*, *Methuselah*, and *Noah*, liv'd long enough to promote the propagation of these necessary doctrines among mankind for the space of no less than *two thousand* years; and we have good reason to rest satisfy'd, as to their having used their best endeavours for that purpose.

THUS, from the oldest history in the world, it plainly appears in *fact*, supported and justified by most important considerations, which are founded in the nature of things; I say, thus it appears in *fact*, that the knowledge of the being and perfections of God, came originally from *revelation*, and was propagated to the world, from one generation to another, by *tradition*. And had the plain simple history of the creation, as it was deliver'd to the first men, been preserv'd among

mong their posterity, I verily believe, that the world would have continued in possession of the great articles of natural religion, without falling into that profound ignorance, and those gross absurdities, which came to overspread the face of the earth ^f. *Celsus*, in objecting to the truth of revelation, is pleased to alledge, *that Moses had only heard from other people those doctrines which he taught his followers*: this *Origen* condescends to yield, and makes this reflection; "I would to God, says he, that *Epicurus*, and *Aristotle*, who is less injurious to providence; and the *Stoicks*, who affirm that God is a body, had likewise heard the same tradition: then the world should not have been fill'd with those doctrines, that overturn providence, or split and disunite it, and introduce a corruptible and corporeal principle, instead of an eternal infinite mind ^g."

ONE cannot precisely fix the time, when the history of the creation came to be corrupted, or lost; but there is good reason to think it was every where preserv'd entire, for above the space of *two thousand years*. I confess the history of the creation, which necessarily conveys to us the know-

^f Dr. Hyde seems to attribute the knowledge of the true God still retain'd among the *Persians* to their preserving some tolerable account of the history of the creation. *Persæ quidem creationis historiam ab immemorialibus seculis quodammodo norunt, idque vel ab Israelitis, vel (ut volunt) a suo Zoroastre. Et ean-*

dem historiam melius quam aliæ aliquæ gentes retinuerunt; in illa fundantes religionem suam, ejusque principia inde petentes, nec quicquam ultra eam sapere prætendentes. Hist. Relig. Veter. Persar. cap. iii. p. 82.

^g *Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. I. p. 17.*

ledge of the deity, was far from being successful in producing its genuine effects in the hearts and lives of mankind. The *old world* abandon'd themselves to such wickedness, that providence thought fit to interpose, and to destroy the whole species, excepting only *eight* persons, by a deluge of waters: it does not however appear, that those workers of iniquity had so corrupted, or lost the knowledge of God, as to give themselves up to *idolatry*^h; we are only told by *Moses* of their horrid violations of the social duties. But when mankind, after the *flood*, was multiply'd upon the earth, and came to be form'd into distinct governments, those who were concern'd in the publick administration, and apply'd themselves to the improvement of civil life, finding how much human affairs depended on the influences of the heavenly bodies, were engag'd to employ their study in contemplating the nature, the motions and effects of those luminaries: and thus having once enter'd into *philosophical* disquisitions, as the history of the creation happen'd to be neglected, corrupted, or lost, so it far'd with the knowledge of the deity; for while some perhaps retain'd a belief of his existence, and only join'd with him in the administration of the world the luminaries of heaven, as his chief ministers, full of wisdom and government, and therefore to be serv'd with some inferior degrees of worshipⁱ:

^h Οὕτω δὲ ἐπεσοδοξία, ἐκ Ἰθνος τι
διαφερόμενον, ἐκ ὅμοια αἰρέσεως,
ἀλλ' ὑδὲ εἰδωλολατρεία. *Ephr.*
adver. Hæres. Lib. I. p. 5. B.

ⁱ Τὸν οὖν τῷ κόσμῳ πάντων δη-
μιουργίαν αὐτὸς μόνος (Ἡλίου)
ἐπιτελεῖται, ἔργων πάντων, καὶ
ποῶν πάντα ἐν καὶ εἶδομαι,
others

Others again came to regard the heavenly bodies as the only wise and powerful beings, upon whom mankind have their dependance, and accordingly gave them out as the only objects of religious worship. In this manner one may reckon mankind came to corrupt, or lose their knowledge of the deity; and it seems to have first taken place among the *Chaldæans*, who began to make *astronomical* observations before any other nation we know of.

'Tis indeed pretty certain, that some articles in the history of the creation were all along preserv'd among mankind. But as the relation, which those articles had to the great *architect*, was dropt out of account, and quite lost; so they only gave occasion to *philosophers* to exercise their wit in forming *hypotheses*, as every man's *invention* happen'd to direct him. Thus, for example, the tradition still went on, *that the world had a beginning*; but the concern which God had in its production being totally neglected, and no longer making a part of the tradition, *philosophers* set their fancy to work upon this article; and carrying their inquiries beyond the luminaries of heaven, which in their opinion were still so many Gods, they imagin'd the origin and formation of the universe in the manner above ex-

καὶ προσκυνῶ αὐτῷ ὡς ἀληθινόν, καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἔνα καὶ πρῶτον, τῷ τῷ δημιουργῶν γινώσκω. *Mercur. Trismeg. Pæmandr. cap. xv. § 7.* These sentiments seem to me so well to suit with the age, wherein Her-

mes or Mercurius Trismegistus is supposed to have liv'd, (*Vid. Shuef. Connec. &c. B. IV. p. 216. — 219. V. I.*) that I am tempted to think, if any there be, they are his genuine remains.

D d

plain'd;

plain'd ; and pronounc'd *aether, fire, air,* or whatever else their fancy suggested to them, as the first cause of all things, to be the chief and supreme deity^k. But who sees not with *Atbanasius*, " That the investiture and worship of
 " such Gods as these, instead of implying any
 " sense of religion, is only laying a foundation
 " of the blackest impiety and atheism ; and sets
 " before these mens eyes, as 'twere in a map,
 " to what a prodigious distance their folly and
 " conceitedness have led them from the light of
 " truth, and the knowledge of the *one true*
 " *God* ! " So that, as the *apostle* observes, " man-
 " kind have unjustly invaded and suppressed the
 " truth^m : because that which is to be known
 " of God is manifest to them ; for *in the history*
 " *of the creation*, God did make it manifest
 " unto them, *and they could not but clearly see it ;*
 " for, from the beginning of the world, the
 " invisible things of God, being attended to in
 " the works he hath made, are clearly seen, even
 " his eternal power and godhead ; so that they
 " are without excuse ; because that *when* they
 " knew God, they glorified him not as God,
 " neither were thankful ; but became vain in
 " their imaginations or *reasonings*, and their

^k Στοιχεῖα δὲ σέβουσι, Διογίνης
 μὲν, ὃ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ δὲ, τὸ ὕδωρ
 ἵππας δὲ, τὸ πῦρ, καὶ οἱ τὰς
 ἀτόμους ἀρχὰς ἀπολιθήμενοι, φιλο-
 σοφίας ὄνομα ἀποδιδόμενοι, ἀθεοί
 τινες ἀθεωπίστοι καὶ φιλήδονοι.
Clem. Alexandr. Strom. Lib. I.
 p. 296. B. Vid. *Firm. Matern.*

de Error. Profan. Relig. cap. ii.
 iii, iv, v.

^l Parker's Transl. of *Atban.*
Orat. against the Gentil. p. 315.

^m Ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατέγοντο τὰ ἔργα,
 καὶ καλύψαν καὶ ἰσχυρίσαντο ἀδικίαν
 ὃ δόξαν ὦ Θεὸς καὶ ὃ γνῶσιν.
Theophylact. in Rom. i. 18.

" foolish

“ foolish heart was darkned ; professing them-
 “ selves to be wise, they became fools ; and chang-
 “ ed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into
 “ those things which by nature are no Gods.”

THUS, I say, mankind in neglecting or losing
 the history of the creation, lost their knowledge
 of God. And from contemplating the motions
 and influences of the heavenly bodies, came to
 attribute divinity to those luminaries.

“ Rom. i. 18. — 23.

Justin Martyr seems to have
 had his eye upon this text, and
 to justify my explication of it,
 as well as my sentiments in ge-
 neral, when he expressly declares,
 Ἡ μὲν γὰρ κατ’ αὐτὴν ἀρετὴ ἡ
 ἀλήθεια δεικνύει ἐν τῷ συνεχόν-
 των ἰσὺ καὶ πόλει καὶ ὁ δημιουργ-
 ῶν πάντων ταῦτα τάξιν· ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔστι
 καὶ τ. λ. i. e. “ The truth that
 “ arises from the order and con-
 “ nection of things in the uni-
 “ verse, is of itself sufficient to
 “ discover the great sovereign
 “ and architect. But the know-
 “ ledge of mankind, through
 “ the long-suffering of God,
 “ being overwhelm’d in forget-
 “ fulness, they acted deceitful-
 “ ly, and the name that is pro-
 “ per to the true God, they
 “ transferred to mortal men.
 “ The world therefore, by
 “ means of a few, were pro-
 “ vided with what should en-
 “ tertain their depravity ; and
 “ by the prevalency of popular
 “ custom, came to be quite
 “ darken’d in their apprehen-
 “ sions about the permanent
 “ and invariable being. For
 “ those who at first paid religi-

ous worship to men of emi-
 nence, did thereby propagate
 “ to posterity an utter oblivion
 “ of the catholick opinion con-
 “ cerning the deity.” *De Mon-*
arch. § 1. So that now, as the
 same author addresses himself
 to the *Gentiles* ; “ By all means,
 “ says he, you must understand,
 “ that no otherwise can you
 “ possibly acquire the know-
 “ ledge of God and of true re-
 “ ligion, but from the *prophets*
 “ only, men who teach you
 “ from *divine inspiration*.” *Ad*
Græc. Cohort. § 42.

I cannot but here likewise
 transcribe what *Chrysostom* re-
 marks upon the 21st ver. of this
 first chap. of the *Romans*. “ *Παρε-*
στι, λέγει, ὁ ἀποστόλος, καὶ τὸς
ἑταίρους ἐπιχειρήσει βαδίζειν ὁδόν,
ἢ πλείους πλεον, ὁ μόνος ὁ θεός
σε, πρὸς τὸ τέλος, ἀλλὰ καὶ
ἀπολείπει ταχέως. ὅτω καὶ ἕται-
ρὶ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον φέρουσιν ὁδόν
βαδίζειν ἐπιχειροῦντες, καὶ τὸ φῶς
ἀφ’ ἑαυτῶν ἀφαιροῦντες, εἴτα αὐτ-
οὶ καὶ τὴν σκότιαν τῆς λογισμῶν
ἑαυτῶν ἐπιπλέουσιν, καὶ ἐν σκότει
τὸ ἀσώματον, καὶ ἐν χήμασι τὸ
ἀσχηματιστον ἐπιζητοῦντες, καὶ οὐκ
ὕψιστον χαλεπώτατον.

AND as this vain philosophy first began in the eastern parts of the world, where mankind after the *flood* first took up their fixed habitations; so from thence it was propagated to the rest of the world. *Plato* tells us, that the inhabitants of *Ægypt* and *Syria* were the *first*, who attended to the motions of the heavenly bodies, and became sensible of their *divinity*; and at the same time expressly declares, that *not only Greece, but all other nations, had received their knowledge of the Gods from those quarters, where, he says, their doctrines were all confirm'd by an infinite, or an exceeding long tract of time*°. So that the propagation of the knowledge of the Gods is here put upon *tradition*; and it deserves to be remarked, that

PHILOSOPHERS were so far from rejecting this method of instruction, this ground of knowledge, and referring the existence of the Gods to rational inquiries, or appealing for the truth of this grand article of religion to the light of nature, or the informations of reason, that they judg'd *tradition* to be the only sure foundation, than which the mind of man was not able to invent a surer, on which the belief of the Gods could be supported; they held it so sacred, that it was impious to disturb it by inquiry and argument; and openly profess'd, that to call it in question in any one article, was to shake the truth of all religion, and to expose it to doubt and uncertainty. Thus *Cotta* finds fault with

° *Plat. in Epinom. p. 986. E. V. II. Vid. Herodot. in Euterp. cap. I.*

Balbus for going about to prove by rational arguments *there are Gods*; and plainly tells him, that *he thereby render'd a thing doubtful, which in his opinion is in no sort doubtful; it being enough to him, that so they were taught by tradition from their forefathers*. And *Pemphides* presuming to inquire, on what account *love* came to be deify'd? he received this smart answer: "You seem to me, *says Plutarch*, to have hit upon a very strange and nice point, or rather, as I may so say, to have endeavour'd to stir things which are not to be mov'd, in reference to the opinion which we have of the Gods, while you demand a reason and demonstration of every thing in particular. For it is sufficient to believe, according to the faith of our forefathers, and the instructions of the country where we have been bred and born, than which we cannot utter or invent a more certain argument; For surely all the wit of human brain, This part of knowledge never could attain.

For this is a foundation and *basis* common to all piety and religion, of which, if once the steady rule and decreed maxims be disorder'd and shaken, all the rest must totter and become suspected." So far were ancient philosophers from having a sense of the existence of an infinite mind, and judging it an obvious truth, easily discover'd and supported from the

^p *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. III. pon. cap. ix.*
^{cap. iv.} *Vid. Orat. pro Milone,* ^q *Plut. in Amator. p. 756.*
^{cap. xxx.} *De Harusp. Res.* Vol. II.

nature and relations of things, a subordination of causes, the works of creation and providence. Why, we plainly see, that in settling the objects of their religious worship, they pretend not to reason and argument; but rest their knowledge and belief of the Gods upon *tradition*, beyond which, *Plutarch* seems expressly to affirm, they are able to discern nothing, and which universally declar'd for the divinity of *sun*, *moon*, and *stars*. As *Diodorus Siculus* reports from *Euemerus*, the ancients taught their children two sorts of Gods; namely, those that are held incorruptible and eternal, such as the *sun*, the *moon*, and the other heavenly bodies; as also the *winds*, and other beings of the like nature: and *secondly*, those whom they counted terrestrial, such as *Hercules*, *Bacchus*, *Aristæus*, and others, who in any remarkable instance had been benefactors to mankind:

AND indeed from the time when mankind first began to lay aside the notion of an invisible God, handed down to them in the history of the creation; and were led by their own vain reasonings about the heavenly bodies, to apprehend those sensible beings as so many Gods; they seem all along possess'd with so great proneness to content themselves with such sort of deities, that unless God had in some instances supernaturally interpos'd to prevent it, I do believe that in length of *time*, every *individual* of human kind would have quite lost all sense and knowledge of

: *Diod. Sicul. Lib. VI. Fragm.*

his

his being and perfections. And does not all this sufficiently confirm what the *apostle* seems fairly to insinuate, namely, that *the world did not by their wisdom, or learning, come to the knowledge of God from the wisdom of God* display'd in the creation of the universe? Is it not rather manifest, that mankind no sooner began to speculate and philosophize about the nature of things, but they began to forsake the living God, and to acknowledge the divinity of the heavenly bodies, and other imaginary deities, till they lost *all sight* of an infinite mind, and were never afterwards capable of recovering any the least suspicion of his existence? And in truth, as *Athanasius* observes, “ mankind had no reason to expect better fortune, when they could not forbear making experiments upon themselves of their own *discretion* and *strength*, when the *peevish feeble infants* thought themselves *strong enough to go alone*, and so refus'd to be led or held any longer by the hand of their maker.” For at this rate, as the same author explains the unhappy fate and turn of mankind in such circumstances,

“ The mind being wholly and continually intent upon, and amus'd by body and matter, and dedicating all her meditation, care, and study to the objects of sense, as they came in her way, and to those groundless and preca-

† Εἰς τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐκ ἔβησαν οἱ οὐνοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ. Oecumen. in
δὲ κόσμος διὰ τῆς σοφίας τοῦ Θεοῦ. loc.
1 Cor. i. 21. Εἰς τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ
διὰ τοῦ κτισμένου φαινόμενα, Parker ubi supra, p. 299.

" rious conceits and *hypotbeses*, that she form'd
 " to herself from the contemplation of these
 " appearances in nature ; she was so blinded
 " and besotted at last, as to persuade herself,
 " that there was no other being but what was
 " *visible* and *material* ; and that *matter* and *form*,
 " and all the variety of them, were *essentially*
 " *and absolutely good* ; and that all real goodness
 " and significancy was collected and lodg'd in
 " them. Being arriv'd at as great a distance
 " from truth as 'twas possible for her to reach,
 " and no longer conscious to herself, that she
 " was created after the similitude of God and
 " goodness, *she had now utterly lost all sight and*
 " *notion of God*, after whose likeness she was
 " created ; and being as it were out of herself,
 " rash, perplex'd, and confounded, she took
 " shadows for substances, and made realities of
 " *nothings*. That intellectual mirrour, in which
 " alone she could view the brightness of the fa-
 " ther's glory, and the express image of his
 " person, was strangely clouded and foul'd by
 " the steams and vapours of animal appetite, so
 " that all reflection ceas'd of those divine rays.
 " And from thenceforward she tumbles, and to-
 " ses, and turns herself to all quarters, and is
 " now entirely acted and affected by corporeal
 " and sensible objects. And the wrong concep-
 " tions and wild imaginations she forms to her-
 " self of the nature and value of these, so in-
 " toxicate and discompose her, that she really
 " believes that *that divinity* which made her, and
 " once made her happy too, is her *new favou-*
 " *rite*

“rite, matter, or body, or at least is naturally
 “join’d to it, and inheres in it. And now hav-
 “ing done her beloved objects of sense so much
 “honour, as even to *deify* them, no wonder
 “she falls down and worships them, reposes all
 “her comfort and satisfaction in them, and
 “looks upon that to be most agreeable, which
 “she has resolv’d with herself shall be most a-
 “dorable.”

Upon which I cannot but take notice, that the *apostle* in explaining the moral state of the *beathen* world, not only shews himself an exact skilful philosopher, but an intelligent faithful historian: he expressly tells us, “that the *Gentiles have not the law of God*; i. e. they have
 “no rules of life, no system of moral duties,
 “which they apprehend to come from God,
 “and to be enforced by his sovereign authority.
 “And indeed how can they imagine them-
 “selves in this situation, when they have no
 “suspicion of his existence? But although the
 “*Gentiles have not the law of God*, yet says the
 “*apostle*, they are a law unto themselves, i. e. in
 “the original make and constitution of their
 “nature they are inwardly formed to kind so-
 “cial affections: So that *by nature they do* (not
 “the law which they have not, but) *the things*
 “*contained in the law*, whereby they shew (not
 “the law itself, but) *the work of the law writ-*
 “*ten in their hearts, their conscience also bearing*

“Parker, ubi supra, p. 252. cap. xxi. p. 52. cap. 22.
 Vid. Tatian Orat. ad Græc.

“witness,

"witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another, according as in the conduct of life they contradict or gratify those kind social dispositions that are interwoven in the frame of their nature." To

ἡ τὰ τὸ νόμον ἡθικὰ ἡθικὰ πάντα πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἡ φύσις ἐπαίδευσι, διαπλάσας γὰρ τοὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπων τὸ γένος; ὁ ποιητής, ἐντέθεικε τῇ φύσει τῷ ἀγαθῷ καὶ τῷ ἐναντίων δι-ἀγνώσει. ὅθεν ἡ μοῖσι Σωκράτης, καὶ Πλάτων, καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ὁ Ἀνσιμαχῶς, καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς τῷ Ἑλληνῶν, τὸ ἀδικον ἐξοδεύσαντο βίον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ βαρβάρων πολλοί. Theodor. Curat. Græcar. Affect. Serm. 12. p. 669. D.

And here upon this text, viz. Rom. ii. 14, 15. let the reader reflect how very cautiously the apostle in this chap. manages his expressions in shewing the difference between Jews and Gentiles with respect to their moral state. Of the Jews he says; *they know the will of God, and approve the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; they rest in the law; they make their boast of God, and of the law; they keep the law; they break or transgress the law.* But in describing the condition of the heathen, he alters his phrases quite, and expresses himself in this manner: *they have not the law; they are a law to themselves; they have the work of the law written in their hearts; they do by nature the things contained in the law; they keep the righteousness of the law; they fulfil (or answer the*

end of) *the law; they sin without law; they perish without law.* In all which the apostle seems particularly careful to adjust his expressions to the truth of things, and to represent the heathen world, as they really are, destitute of the law of God, or having no knowledge of God as their lawgiver, in which respect he elsewhere calls them "Αἰεοι. Αἰεος δὲ ἐκότης ἀποκαλῶ τῆς, οἱ μὲν ὅτως ὄντα Θεὸν ἐνόησαν. Clem. Alexandr. Admon. ad Gent. p. 14. C. And I presume every body will allow, there is a great difference betwixt a law, and the work of that law, or the things contained in it. Among the Spartans it was lawful to steal. In other nations the work of this law is done without any law for such practices.

They who go about, as Lord Shaftesbury seems to do, to explain the nature and obligation of moral virtue, without any regard to the deity, cannot be thought to have any difficulties upon this article, or in any sort to imagine that mankind not being able of themselves to acquire the knowledge of God as their lawgiver, are therefore not accountable to him for their actions. Those however who reject that way of accounting

"this

“ this pitiful condition were mankind reduced
 “ by wickedly neglecting the history of the crea-
 “ tion, and indulging false notions about the
 “ heavenly bodies.

I HAVE already hinted that the *Chaldeans* being the first who studied the courses of the stars, they were the first who ascribed divinity to these beings, and paid them religious worship.

for moral virtue, as not so consistent with true philosophy, may possibly apprehend that the argument I maintain is liable to several difficulties: nor will I undertake to remove all the *speculative* objections that may be started. I would only observe, that no difficulties whatever can induce me to believe an opinion false, whose truth is every where clearly supported by *common fact* or *universal experience*. In the mean time I shall here transcribe these reflections of a very ingenious and learned man.

On ne peut douter, says Mr. Arnauld, que lors que Dieu ne s'estoit fait connoître que dans la Judée, il n'y ait eu un grand nombre de nations entieres qui l'ignoroient. Ce seroit une heresie que de le nier puisque l'écriture l'assure. Il est encore plus certain, qu'ils ignoroient ce qu'on appelle la loi de Dieu; c'est à dire, qu'ils ne sçavoient pas que Dieu eust rien commandé ou défendu aux hommes. Quatr. Denonc. du péché philosoph. p. 64. Reflex. 2. And says the same author in another place, L'homme aiant esté créé pour

connoître & servir Dieu, il n'est pas possible que sans péché il ait esté privé de la connoissance de Dieu, ni de celle de sa sainte loi, c'est à dire de ce que Dieu demandoit de lui pour ne le point offenser. C'est pourquoi de ce qu'il y a eut tant de peuples qui ont ignoré la souverain estre, & ce qu'il vouloit qu'ils fissent pour bien vivre, c'est une suite & une preuve du péché originel. Et par consequent il faudroit estre Pelagien pour pouvoir dire que l'existence de Dieu puisse estre ignorée inculpate, c'est à dire sans la faute de l'homme; si on remonte jusqu'à la faute qui est commune à tous les hommes, qui est le péché originel, & les suites de ce péché qui sont l'aveuglement dans l'entendement, & la corruption dans la volonté, si fortement attaché à l'amour des biens créés, que ne cessant d'appliquer l'esprit à leur recherche, elle le rend de plus en plus incapable de connoître le bien souverain & infini. Second. Denonc. du péché Philos. Art. II. p. 85. Vid. Shuckford's Connect. of the sacred and proph. Hist. B. VIII. p. 346, 347. Vol. II.

It is not indeed probable, that, so early as the days of *Terah Abram's* father, they had wholly set aside the belief of the supreme God. It appears however, that at that time they were so zealous in defence of their new deities, and the worship they offered them, that they drove *Terah* with his family out of their country, and would not suffer them to live among them^y. I confess we cannot positively say, what are the particular points upon which *Terah* differed with the *Chaldaeans*; for it should seem, that he once worshipped the same Gods with them^z. But one may alledge he was endeavouring to introduce a reformation in their religion, and for that reason came to be expelled. Mean while whatever attempts he may be supposed to have made in *Chaldaea*, toward recovering the religion of nature; his endeavours for that purpose do not seem to have been so successful in his own family. We are told that after *Terah's* death, God was pleased to call *Abram* away from his father's house and kindred, and to set him up in a distinct family by himself^a. And thus *Abram* and his family being, as it were, separated from the rest of mankind, and formed into a particular society by themselves, we are assured that God continued in an extraordinary manner, to have communication with *Abraham* and his posterity for many generations. And it should seem, that hereby the history of the creation,

^y *Judith*, v. 7, 8.

^z *Jesh*. xxiv. 2.

^a *Gen*. xii. 1.

and

and the knowledge of the being and perfections of God, the great foundation of natural religion, were preserved pure and intire without corruption.

IN fact it is certain, that all other nations of the world, from one step to another, came to lose the true history of the creation, and together with it the knowledge of God, or the pure religion of nature^b. And is it not surprising to find the posterity of *Abraham*, the people of the *Jews*, pent up in a small tract of ground, amidst other nations altogether ignorant of God, and over-run with idolatry, still preserving the history of the creation, and possessing the knowledge of the being and perfections of the *one, only living, and true God*! However our modern *deists* have almost in every instance copied after *Celsus* in his attempts to discredit the *Christian* revelation, I hope they will never imitate him in his branding the *Jews* for professing the existence only of one God: *Those silly shepherds and herdsmen* (says *Celsus*, the man of reason, who went about to overthrow *Christianity* by undermining the credit of the *Jewish* institution, upon which it is

^b Dr. Hyde is of opinion that from the deluge to this day, the *Persians* have all along had preserved among them the knowledge of the true God. De iis, says he, peculiariter notari debet, quod veterum Persarum ecclesia & gens sola sit, & in toto terrarum orbe unica, quæ (excepta *Israelitarum* & *Judæorum*

linea sacra) continuè & constanter à suis primordiis seu incunabilis, & ab ipso discurvo ad hoc usque tempus, veri Dei notitiam & cultum semper sine ulla temporum interruptione retinuerit, & adhuc retineat. Hist. Relig. Vet. Persar. cap. i. p. 22.

^c Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. I. cap. vi. Lib. VII. cap. iii.

“ founded;

founded; *those silly shepherds*, says he, *and herds-
men*) who followed Moses as their leader, being
imposed upon by his rustick frauds, came to believe,
there is only one God^a. And in truth these superior
advantages cannot be attributed to any superior
penetration, wherewith the *Jews* were blessed
beyond other people: they were certainly infe-
rior to all other civilized nations upon earth, in the
knowledge and study of arts and sciences. Nor
can it be thought, when once they were informed
of the being and perfection of God, that a settled
conviction of the reasonableness of this doctrine,
made them tenacious of professing it. On the
contrary, they seem to have had a most unac-
countable passion for idolatry, and to serve the
Gods of the nations about them; for which rea-
son God was pleased frequently to employ his
extraordinary messengers, the *prophets*, to in-
culcate upon them a sense of his being and per-
fections that they might not fall away from his
worship: and when they happened to abandon the
knowledge of God, so as to give up themselves to
idolatry; he was then pleased not only to employ
his prophets, but to inflict his righteous judgments
upon them, in order to reform and reclaim them.
And does not all this make it evident, that as
the knowledge of God was first conveyed to the
Jews, and then handed down from one gene-
ration to another by *tradition*; so it could never
have been preserved, but would have been quite
lost among the *Jews*, as well as among other
nations, had not God interposed to prevent it

^a *Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. I. p. 17.*

by some particular communications from heaven, or by some special acts of his providence ?

* *Theodoret* rightly apprehends that God in his special providence was pleased to separate the people of the *Jeaus* from the rest of mankind, and to maintain among them the principles of true religion, on this express purpose, that by their means the knowledge of his being and perfections might be propagated to other nations. So that the *Jeaus* at first were thus highly distinguished, and set apart for the benefit of all other nations.

Τῶν γὰρ ἔθνων ἀπάντων τὸ τοῦτο ἔθνος θεογνωσίας ἐχειροτόνησε διδασκαλοὶ καὶ καθάπερ εἰς τὸ θεῖον ἔθνος ἐπιμίλειαν οὐ μὴ ἐξελίκετο ἢ Μωϋσῃ, οὐ μὴ τῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ πάλιν ἢ Σαμουὴλ, ἀλλὰ οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι τοῦ ποσθητῶν, καὶ δι' ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου φιλοσοφίαν ἀσκησάντων ἀπανταῖς ἐκτελεῖται τὰς ὁμοφυλίας ἕτω δι' ἐνὸς ἔθνους τῆ Ἰσραὴλ, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τὰ τ' αὐτὴν ἐχούσιν φύσιν, εἰς τὸ εὐσεβείας κοινωνίαν ἐκάλει. — Ἄθρει τοι γὰρ, ὅπως ἀνθρώπων ἀπάντων περιέσσει τοῦ ὅλων ὁ ποιητὴς, καὶ ἔμνον τοῦ ἐξ Ἀβραάμ καλασόντων τὸ γένος, ἀλλὰ πάντων τοῦ ἐξ Ἀδάμ. καὶ διὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἔθνους ἀπανταῖς ἐποθέσει ποδὶ θεογνωσίας τὰ ἔθνη. καὶ ἔμνον ἡνίκα ἡνσίθει ποσσίφει ἢ διδασκαλίας τῶντων πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅτι τὸ παρρησιόχας εὐσεβείας δικας. — Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἔμελλε τὸ μέγα τὸ οἰκονομίας τελείας μυήσεων, καὶ τὸ διὰ τὸ θεῖας ἐκτελεσθήσεως εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκονομίαν καλασείρεας κήρυ-

μα, τμηκαῦτα λοιπὸν τὸ τοῦτο ἔθνος, ὁ ἐπ' ἐκτελεσθῆαι τοῦ ἐθνῶν ἀπάντων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐξελέξατο, εἰς πᾶσαν καλασείρεας τὴν οἰκονομίαν, ἢ ἐθίσαν ἀπανταῖς ἀκούειν, οἱ τῇ πολυθείᾳ κατεχόμενοι πλάνη, ὡς εἰς ἐστὶ θεός, ἀρετὴ καὶ γῆς ποιητὴς, καὶ ἔσται τὸ κήρυγμα ἐνταῦθα τοῖς θεοῖς Ἀποστόλοις γένηται. *Theod. de Provid. Orat. 10. p. 454. B. 456. A. 457. A. Oper. tom. 4.*

These reflections well deserve to be regarded. 'Tis from such reflections that *Theodoret* clearly confutes the objection, now keenly insisted on, against the *Christian* institution, namely its having been *so late*, or that so many ages have pass'd before it was published :

Εἰσὶ τινες μηδὲν ἐργαζόμενοι κατὰ τὸ μακάριον Παῦλον, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζόμενοι, καὶ πολυπραγμονοῦντες ἂν μὴ θεῖας, καὶ τὴν θείας σοφίας τὴν αὐτοῖς τοῖς οἰκίαις λογισμοῖς μελετῆσαι φιλονεικῶντες, καὶ λέγοντες. τίνος χάριν ἐκ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ταῦτα ἀκονίσανται ὁ θεός, ἀλλὰ μετὰ πολλὰς ἰσχυρὰς ἀποδείξεις ὅτι μὴ τὸ τὰ τοιαῦτα πολυπραγμονεῖν λίαν ἐστὶ θρασυῖ, καὶ τολμηρὸν, καὶ μαρίας ἀπάσης ἐπικεῖνα, αὐτοὶ φαῖεν ἂν οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα διερευνῶμενοι. ἵνα δὲ δείξωμεν ἐκ ἐκ μετὰ μελείας ταῦτα τὸ θεῖον οἰκονομῆσαι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ταῦτα διατάσσονται, φέρεται τὴν θεῖαν γραφὴν εἰς μίσην παραγάγωμεν, κ. λ. λ. This excellent author goes on. From several instances in the dispensations of God's providence, he exposes

sophers, who profess'd this essential article of natural religion, came to acquire it no otherwise: we have above observed, that the *Platonists* had it from *Socrates*; that *Socrates* had it from *Anaxagoras Clazomenius*; but where *Anaxagoras* pick'd it up we know not, only we are pretty certain, it was no production of his own sagacious reasoning. *Aristotle* seems to say, that *Anaxagoras* had it from one *Hermotimus*, who was likewise a *Clazomenian*^e. But from whence did *Hermotimus* derive this knowledge of an infinite mind, which he imparted to *Anaxagoras*? *Pliny* in his *Natural History* reports, concerning, I suppose, this *Hermotimus*, that *his soul leaving his body half dead, was wont to wander about; by which means he came to relate things done at a great distance, which no body could know without being present*^h. But we know little about this extraordinary person, nor can we determine, whether he was contemporary with *Anaxagoras*, or long before him, and perhaps that *Hermotimus*, whom *Pythagoras*'s soul, as we learn from himself, had once animated. Only 'tis not likely, that this is the man, since *Pythagoras* does not seem to have remember'd his opinion about an *infinite mind*. The truth of the matter is, *Anaxagoras*, and

^e *Arist. Metaph. Lib. I. cap. iii. p. 844. V. II. Diog. Laertius* seems to say (in his *preface p. 2.*) that *Anaxagoras* had his doctrine from *Linus*, who begins his *poems* thus:

^f *Ἡ ψὺς τοῦ Χέρμω, ὃς ἂν ἄμα πᾶσι ἐκπαύεται.*

But this only expresses *Anaxagoras*'s notion of the condition in which he conceives the material principle at the formation of the universe, and intimates nothing concerning a mind.

^h *Plin. Lib. VII. cap. lii.*

most other Greek philosophers, travell'd into *Ægypt*, and other *eastern* countries, in order to improve their stock of knowledge. And one may rest satisfy'd, that *Anaxagoras* (or, if you please, *Hermotimus*) chanced some where or other in his travels to light upon the doctrine of an infinite mindⁱ, which he brought along with him into *Greece*, and made use of, as may be remarked by the way, not in establishing the true foundation of natural religion, but in sorting his *homœomeries*, that he might introduce the formation of the world according to his own extravagant fancy. Plain therefore it is from all instances wherein we meet with the notion of God, whatever purposes they apply'd it to, and what absurdities soever they maintain'd along with it, that the knowledge of this being was derived from *tradition*, and must have come at first from *revelation*^k.

ⁱ Αναξαγόρας δὲ καὶ Πυθαγόρας εἰς Ἀἴγυπτον ἀρκεόμενοι, τοῖς Αἰγυπτίῳ καὶ Ἑβραίων αὐτόθι σοφοῖς ἐπικυρίως, καὶ τῷ περὶ τῆς οὐλῆς ἀρχιμακάδην γινώσκον. Theodor. Curat. Græcar. Affect. Serm. 2. p. 489. D.

^k Ἐἰ δὲ τῶτο, οὐ μαθήσεως ἡ γινώσκῃ καὶ ἡ ἐπιστήμη, μαθήσεως δ' ὕψους, ζητῶν ἀνάγκη τὴν διδασκαλῶν. Κλειώδης μὲν γὰρ Ζήνωνος ἐπιγρῆφεται καὶ Θεόφραστον Ἀριστοτέλη, Μελέτρου δὲ τὴν Ἐπίκουρον, καὶ Πλάτων Σωκράτην ἄλλα καὶ ἐπὶ Πυθαγόρῃ ἔλθω, καὶ Φερικύδην, καὶ Θάλητα, καὶ τὰς πρώτας σοφούς, Ἰσακρίαν, τὴν τῶν διδασκαλῶν ζητῶν καὶ Αἰγυπτίους ἱππῆς, καὶ Ἰνδοὺς,

καὶ Βαβυλωνίους, καὶ τὰς Μάγους αὐτὰς, καὶ πάντοτε τὴν τῶν διδασκαλῶν ἀπαύτων. ἀνάγκη δὲ σὲ ἐπὶ τῇ πρώτῃ γίνεσθαι ἀνθρώπων καὶ κῆθε ἀρχομαι ζητῶν τίς ὁ διδασκαλός; ἀνθρώπων μὲν ὅστις ἐδέξατο γὰρ μεμαθήκεσαν. — Ἔτις ἐστὶν ὁ οὗτος γινώσκων ἀπάντων διδασκαλός, ὁ σύμβουλος τῷ Θεῷ, τὰ πάντα περιεργαζόμενος. ὁ δὲ, ἀνωθεν οὐκ ἀπὸ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν κόσμου πολυτροπῶς, καὶ πολυμερῶς πεπαιδευμένον τε καὶ τελειότ. ὅθι εἰκότως εἴρηται, Μὴ εἴησις ἐκείνῳ διδασκαλὸς ἐπὶ τῇ γῆ. ὁρᾷς ὅπόθεν ἔχει τὰς λαβὰς ἡ φιλοσοφία ἡ ἀληθής. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. VI. p. 643. B.

As for the *immortality* of the soul, or a future state of existence, *Moses* indeed does not particularly mention this article in his account of things, when he treats of the creation of the world. But since God gave a law to mankind, enforc'd by a sanction, we may reasonably conclude, that the first men were sufficiently informed about the nature and duration of those rewards and punishments, which their sovereign Lord had annexed to the rule of their conduct, in order to secure their obedience. And since we meet with this doctrine, as an express article in the belief of men of after ages, we may well be persuaded, that they had it deriv'd or transmitted to them from the first men.

Tully observes, that *as we naturally apprehend, there are Gods*, (by which he means the *luminaries* of heaven) *and understand from reason what they are; so we conceive from the consent of all nations, that our souls survive the dissolution of their bodies: but what are their abodes after death, or what their condition is, must be learned from reason*¹. It should seem however, the time was when this fundamental article of natural religion was not known to the people of *Greece*; and therefore do they pretend to inform us, who was the first philosophers that introduced it into that part of the world. But whether it was *Thales* or *Pythagoras*, and however absurd their notions were upon this article, they seem to have derived their knowledge of it from the inhabi-

¹ *Cic. Tuscul. Lib. I. cap. xvi.*

tants of the east. The Roman philosopher expressly says, that *Phercydes Syrus* was the first who maintained this doctrine in writing; and that his scholar *Pythagoras* embraced and confirmed it. But in the opinion of *Herodotus*, the *Egyptians* were the first who taught the immortality of the soul; and *there are Greeks*, says he, *who some of them sooner, and some later entertained it, and gave it out as their own*^m. It should seem however, that *Pausanias* was well informed that the *Chaldeans* and the *Indian Magi* were the first who professed the immortality of the human soul, and that herein they were followed by the *Greeks*, particularly by *Plato*ⁿ. And indeed *Plato* tells us, that we ought to believe the antient and sacred traditions, which teach us, *the soul is immortal*^o.

So that one may here likewise presume to say, the knowledge of this other essential article of natural religion was, as well as the former, propagated by tradition; and must owe its original to revelation. *Tully*, who well knew how to preserve a *decorum* in all the subjects and characters, represents *Scipio* to have had information about the future existence of the soul, in a vision from *Africanus*^p.

GIVE me now leave to observe, whatever be the reason that induces people now a days to set up so warmly for the strength of their own ge-

^m *Herodot. in Euterp. cap. cxxiii.*

ⁿ *Pausan. in Messenic. p. 142.*

Lib. XXXI.

^o *Plat. Epist. 7. p. 335. V. III.*

^p *Cic. de Amicit. cap. iv.*

nus, the extent of their knowledge, and their ability to discover the whole compass of natural religion; that they zealously condemn all *super-natural revelation* as quite needless, altogether absurd and inconsistent: certain it is, that antient philosophers were so sensible of the narrow and scanty measure of human knowledge, and how little able they were to discern, with any certainty, the great articles of natural religion; that they always confessed the need they had of divine revelation and influences, and never failed to attribute every thing great and extraordinary to the particular favour and assistance of heaven. The best philosophers frankly owned, it is vastly difficult to discover the being and nature of God; and plainly said, it is impossible to explain such things to the bulk of mankind: they tell us, that in this life, there can be no certainty of the immortality of the soul, and that a divine word or revelation is the only thing that can put it beyond question. They say expressly, we cannot well know what is pleasing to God without revelation; and people thought that *Pythagoras* was sent from heaven, on purpose to instruct them. So that I say, however some over-wise gentlemen among us may bear themselves upon their natural stock of knowledge,

131 Jambl. de Vit. Pythag. cap. ii. Plat. in Phaed. p. 85. C.

132 Plat. in Timæ. p. 28. C. Xe. Vol. II.

133 Soph. in Epist. ad Æschin. p. Jambl. de Vit. Pythag. cap.

1000. B. Cic. de Nat. Deor. xxviii. p. 116.

134 Lib. III. cap. xxxix. Id. ibid. cap. vi. p. 23.

upon their own wit and learning, and think it below their sagacity to allow of supernatural revelation, though supported by all the evidences that can approve it to common sense and reason; yet men in antient times, men of the best parts and highest reputation, the *great characters of antiquity*, learned from their sense and experience of things to think and speak more *soberly*, and were not ashamed to confess the need they had of divine revelation.

*O cecita de le terrene menti !
In qual profonda notte,
In qual fosca calligine d'errore
Son le nostr' alme immerse,
Quando tu non le illustri, ò sommo sole !
A che del saper vostro
Insuperbite, ò miseri mortali ?
Questa parte di noi che 'ntende & vede,
Non è nostra virtù, ma vien dal cielo.
Esso la dà come a lui piace, e toglie.*

Past. Fid. Act. V. Scen. VI.

I cannot better conclude this argument, than in transcribing these reflections of *Eusebius*: “ Do
“ not, *says he*, ridicule the Gods, but pity the
“ great folly and ignorance of the most miser-
“ able race of mankind: and looking every
“ where around you, behold what great bless-
“ ings *Jesus Christ*, who is God, is the author
“ of; whilst by the doctrine of his *gospel* he
“ delivers

“ delivers the world from so great a disease, so
 “ *long and lasting a blindness*^x. For since
 “ *Greeks and Barbarians* do all of them, be-
 “ fore the coming of our Saviour, every where
 “ appear without the knowledge of the *true*
 “ *God*, and esteeming these things that are not,
 “ as if they were; must not the dispensation of
 “ the *gospel* seem wonderfully great; now that
 “ mankind every where, even those who dwell
 “ in the utmost parts of the earth, are delivered
 “ from those errors that never but oppressed
 “ them all their life long? How can we but
 “ admire the revelation of the gospel truly sa-
 “ lutary and evangelical, whereby chapels and
 “ temples are dedicated in towns and villages,
 “ in the solitudes of barbarous nations, to the
 “ supreme king, the creator, the only God o-
 “ ver all; and whereby sacred writings, that
 “ contain the rules of the most perfect vir-
 “ tue, and the truest piety, are put in the
 “ hands of men, women, and children, are
 “ publicly explained to them for the conduct
 “ of life?

“ WITHOUT doubt, great and wonderful
 “ is the *gospel* of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*,
 “ that teacheth all mankind to worship with
 “ becoming thoughts and affections the *God and*
 “ *Lord of the sun and moon, the creator of the*
 “ *world*, a being above and beyond the universe;

^x Euseb. *Præp. Evang.* Lib. p. 140.

III. cap. v. p. 95. D.

² *Id. ibid.* Lib. V. cap. i.

³ *Id. ibid.* Lib. IV. cap. iv. p. 179.

"to celebrate not the elements of bodies, but
 "the giver of life itself, of food, and of all
 "good things: by no means to reverence the
 "visible parts of the world, and what things
 "are perceivable by our senses, for these are of
 "a corruptible nature, but to adore that mind
 "alone, which is the *architect* of the whole,
 "and of every particular part, and in all these
 "things is invisible: religiously to confess only
 "that one divine power that pervades and beau-
 "tifully adjusts all these things, being in its
 "nature incorporeal and intellectual, we ought
 "rather to say, inexpressible and incomprehen-
 "sible; shewing itself in all things wherein it
 "operates; penetrating and passing through all
 "things in an incorporeal manner without being
 "mixed or confounded; still demonstrating the
 "wonders of its divinity in all things, not only
 "that are in heaven, but that are in earth, in
 "all and every one of the elements; being pre-
 "sent to all things, and to us, in an invisible
 "manner, not to be perceived by our senses;
 "and governing the universe by the ineffable
 "measures of wisdom."

Thus *Eusebius* justly attributes the only true
 religious knowledge of mankind to the *Christian*
 revelation. And from hence one is naturally
 directed to explain the truth of that most va-
 luable institution; which would compleat this
 argument. But as many excellent persons, espe-

Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. III. cap. viii. p. 96. D.
 cially

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cially of late years have managed this subject to the best advantage, and I have elsewhere contributed my endeavours, in explaining an article that is not commonly handled, let me here only be indulged the pleasure of transcribing these reflections of two gentlemen, who were no priests, and whose christianity was the effect, not of education, but of rational enquiry.

In his treatise against the Gentiles, Lactantius expresses himself thus: *Magno, says he, & excellenti ingenio viri, cum se doctrinae penitus deditissent, quicquid laboris poterat impendi, contemptis omnibus & publicis & privatis actionibus, ad inquirendae veritatis studium contulerunt; existimantes multo esse praeclarius, humanarum divinarumque rerum investigare ac scire rationem, quam aut struendis opibus, aut cumulandis honoribus inherere. — Sed neque adepti sunt id quod volebant, & operam simul atque industriam perdidērunt. Quia veritas, id est, arcanum summi Dei, qui fecit omnia, ingenio ac propriis non potest sensibus comprehendere: alioqui nihil inter Deum hominemque distaret, si consilia & dispositiones illius majestatis aeternae cogitatio assequeretur humana. Quod quia fieri non potuit, ut homini per seipsum ratio divina notesceret, non est passus hominem Deus lumen sapientiae requirentem, diutius oberrare, ac sine ullo laboris effectu vagari per tenebras inextricabileis; aperuit oculos ejus aliquando, & notionem veritatis munus suum fecit; ut & humanam sapientiam nullam esse monstraret,*

straret, & erranti ac vago viam consequendæ immortalitatis ostenderet^b. This leads one to recollect Calvin's opinion, which is thus: Si (inquit) ab operum Dei intuitu homines ad veram Dei notitiam dirigerentur, sapienter Deum cognoscerent, vel naturali & proprio sapiendi modo. Sed quia toti mundo nihil ad eruditionem profuit, quod Deus sapientiam suam exeruerat in creaturis, aliâ viâ deinde aggressus est ad homines docendos^c. But as Arnobius observes:

Si tibi fastidium tantum est, ut oblatis respicias beneficium muneris; quinimo si tantum sapientia prævalet, ut ea, quæ offeruntur a Christo, ludum atque ineptias nomines, quid invitans peccat, cuius solæ sunt hæ partes, ut sub tui juris arbitrio fructum suæ benignitatis exponat? — An numquid orandus es, ut beneficium salutis ab Deo digneris accipere, & tibi aspernanti, fugientique longissime, infundenda in gremium est divinæ benevolentiae gratia? Vis sumere quod offertur, atque in tuos usus convertere? Consulueris tu tibi. Aspernaris, contemnis, & despicias? Te muneris commoditate privaveris: nulli Deus infert necessitatem, imperiosa formidine nullum terret. — Christianus ergo ni fuero, spem salutis habere non potero? Ita est, ut ipse proponis. Partes enim salutis dandæ, conferendique animis quod tribui convenit, necessariumque est applicari, solus a Deo Patre injunctum habet & traditum; ita se habentibus semotis atque interioribus causis. —

^b Lactant. Institut. Lib. I. cap. i.

^c Calv. in 1 Cor. i. 21.

Quod nobis obiectare consueſtis, novellam eſſe religionem noſtram, & ante dies natam propemodum paucos, neque vos potuiſſe antiquam & patriam relinquere, & in barbaros ritus peregrinosque traduci, ratione iſtud intenditur nulla. Quid enim ſi hoc modo culpam velimus inſligere prioribus illis atque antiquiſſimis ſeculis, quod inventis frugibus glandes ſpreverint, & repudiaverint arbuta, qui corticibus contegi, & amiciri deſierint pellibus, poſtquam veſtis excogitata eſt textilis, uſu & commoditate ſuccinctior? aut quod ſtructis domibus, & lautioribus ſucceſſibus inſtitutis, non antiquas adamaverint caſulas, nec ſub rupibus & cavernis præoptaverint ut belluæ permanere? Commune eſt omnibus, & ab ipſis pene incunabilis traditum, bona malis anteferre, inutilibus utilia præponere, & quod eſſe conſtiterit pretioſius, lætius id conſectari & petere; in eoque deſigere ſpem ſalutis, & ſalutarium commodorum^d.

^d *Arnob. adv. Gent. Lib. II. p. 52. 53.*

F I N I S.



MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

